The political ecology of indigenous movements : a case study of the Shuar people's struggles against the oil industry in the Ecuadorian Amazon.

Bjureby, Erika

The Political Ecology of Indigenous Movements:

A Case Study of the Shuar People's Struggles against the Oil Industry in the Ecuadorian Amazon

Erika Bjureby
Department of Geography
King's College London
PhD Thesis

CONTENTS

Figures

Tables

Abstract

This thesis examines indigenous movements and political organising in the Amazonian region in Ecuador. Specifically, it considers how indigenous movements have been created over the last decades to challenge land reforms and colonisation programs, neoliberal policies and oil development through both formal and informal political processes. The theoretical framework of the thesis combines the concerns of political ecology and new social movement analysis in order to investigate the ways in which notions of cultural identity, territory and place, and control over access become central to indigenous politics and struggles. The empirical case study is of the Shuar movement of the province of Morona Santiago and relies on qualitative methodologies with a particular focus on ethnographic investigation, participant observation, documentary analysis and in-depth interviews.

Following the introduction (Chapter 1), the theoretical framework (Chapter 2), and methodology (Chapter 3), the thesis turns to the Shuar case study itself. Specifically, Chapter 4 presents an overview of indigenous struggles and oil politics in Ecuador that sets the scene for the empirical analysis of Chapters 5, 6, and 7. Thus, in Chapter 5 the aim is to examine the way in which the Shuar struggle has been partly about the articulation of Shuar cultural identity and its deployment in political battles with both the Ecuadorian State and transnational oil companies. In contrast, Chapter 6 considers how that struggle has itself come to be defined in terms of particular geographical notions of Shuar territoriality and sense of place. Here, the effort by the Shuar movement to advance indigenous interests through the interweaving of ancestral and ecological claims is explored. Then, in Chapter 7 the ways in which the Shuar struggle involves a complex politics of land and resource access is investigated. Finally, Chapter 8 summarises the findings of the thesis and distils a possible future research agenda from those findings.

Acknowledgements

Over the course of researching and writing this thesis I have become indebted to many friends and colleagues. In their own unique way, each has inspired, supported and challenged me along my journey. As my debts span numerous countries, a multitude of institutions and organisations, and countless individuals, it is not feasible to name them all here. If this is a thesis that reflects theoretical understandings of indigenous movements and oil development in Ecuador, it is nonetheless a work that is also embedded in empirical research conducted between 2002 and 2004 in Ecuador. I am thus very grateful to many institutions and individuals that helped to facilitate that research. My research base was in the towns Puyo, Macas and Sucua located in the Morona Santiago province. One of my biggest debts of gratitude to is the two Shuar federations that form the empirical core of this study. I was delighted that the *Federación Indenpendiente del Pueblo Shuar del Ecuador* (FIPSE) and *Federación Interprovincial de Centros Shuar* (FICSH) agreed to be part of my research project. Part of the research involved focused visits to selected communities outside the towns. I am thus grateful to various local communities and their representatives who permitted me to visit in them so as to be able to gain a better appreciation of Shuar struggles and political organising. In particular I am deeply grateful to the Anguisha, Kuja, Kuash and Mukucham families. Various colleagues have been patient with me as I have sought to relate my theoretical concerns to empirical conditions in Ecuador engaging generously through discussions and readings. My teachers and guides at King's College London- Ray Bryant, Michael Redclift, and Linda Newson- gave me the invaluable support and tools necessary to complete the thesis. I am truly grateful for their wise and gentle guidance and supervision. In addition, the Swedish Education Authority (CSN), Link Utvecklingspartner AB, and Soroptimist International have supported me financially throughout this research project. The research and writing of this thesis inched forward at what seemed to me at least to be a painfully slow rate. The routines of teaching and administrative work played a role here, but various health problems I encountered in Ecuador also intervened. My immediate friends and family have supported me through thick and thin along this journey and have held me with love and humour. Above all, I have my family to thank for providing emotional and financial support at every twist and turn in this research.

Glossary

Spanish terms

Apertura	Opening
Asociación	Association
Ayahuasca	Psychotropic plant
Biodiversidad	Biodiversity
Café	Coffee
Campesino	Peasant
Campo	Countryside, field
Centro	Centre/s
Chakra	Agricultural land
Chicha	A traditional fermented drink made of juka
Colono	Refers to any person who lives in an IERAC designated individual parcel and has come from somewhere else (highlands, coasts) to live in indigenous territory
Dirigente	Leader
Federado	Federated
Federación	Federation
Gringo	Westerners (first used for Americans)
Indígena	Indigenous
Indigenismo	Classification of Indigenous Peoples
Indio	Indian
Jívaro	Terminology used for the Shuar by the missionaries and the Spanish
Juca	Cassava
Kamote	Sweet Potato
La compañía	The company. All multinational corporations and the various service industries they contract, regardless of site of origin are called *la compañía*.
Levantamiento	Uprising
Maiz	Corn
Mani	Peanuts
Mestizo	Person of mixed race (Indigenous/white)
Montaña	Mountain
Nacíon	Nation
Nacionalidad	Nationality
Naranjilla	Citrus fruit
Oriente	Here refers to the Amazonian region of Ecuador
Palmito	A type of palm tree
Papachina	A root vegetable similar to the potato
Plátano	Plantains
Pueblo	People
Rios	Rivers
Selva	Forest
Territorio	Territory
Tierra	Land
Tierras Baltidas	Fallow lands

Words used by the Shuar

Arutam	The protecting god of the forest
Etsa	The sun, a cultural hero
Huayusa	A tea that the Shuar drink in the mornings
Ií Nunké	Our territory
Kashi	Guanta (a small animal that looks like a Guinea Pig)
Mundo Shuar	Publications about Shuar culture, customs, myths, gender relations, ethnohistory
Nantu	The moon
Nunkui	The earth spirit
Tsantsa	Shrunken heads
Tsunki	The water spirit/ mistress of shamanism
Uwi	Chonta
Uwishint	Shuar shaman

Acronyms

AIEPRA	Asociación de Indígenas Evangélicos de Pastaza, Region Amazónica
ARCO	Atlantic Richfield Company
ARUTAM	A guerrilla-styled organisation of ex-militaries
CDES	Centro de Derechos Económicos y Sociales
CONAIE	Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador
CONDEMPE	Consejo de Desarrollo de las Nacionalidades y Pueblos Ecuadorianas
CONFENAIE	Confederación de Nacionalidades de la Amazónia Ecuatoriana
CTI	Circumscripcíon Territorial Indígena (Indigenous Territorial Circumscription)
ECORAE	Instituto para el Ecodesarrollo de la Región Amazónica Ecuatoriana
EIA	Estudio de Impacto Ambiental
FICSHA	Federación Interprovincial de Centros Shuar-Achuar
FICSH	Federación Interprovincial de Centros Shuar del Ecuador
FINAE	Federación Interprovincial de la Nacionalidad Achuar del Ecuador
FIPSE	Federación Indenpendiente del Pueblo Shuar del Ecuador
IERAC	Instituto Ecuatoriano de Reforma Agrario y Colonizacíon
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INDA	Instituto Nacional de Desarrollo Agrario
INEFAN	Instituto Ecuatoriano Forestal de Areas Naturales y Vida Silvestre
ISIS	The Institute for Science and Interdisciplinary Studies
MEM	Ministry of Energy and Mining
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OCP	Oleuducto de Crudos Pesados
OPIP	Organización de Pueblos Indígenas del Pastaza
OSHE	Organización Shuar del Ecuador
PSUR	Componente de Recursos Naturales del Programa de Sostenibilidad y Union Regional

Chapter 1 Introduction

This thesis examines political organising by indigenous movements in the Amazon region in Ecuador. It considers how indigenous movements of the Shuar people have emerged there in the last decades in response to externally-led land reforms and colonisation, neoliberal policies, oil development, as well as agricultural and rural development programs. It considers the ways in which these movements have engaged in both formal and informal political processes. Exploring the complex and multi-faceted struggles of indigenous movements sheds light on the social and political possibilities embodied by them as well as the broader impact of indigenous struggles in the contemporary era.

This empirical focus is situated theoretically with reference to work on new social movements, indigenous politics, cultural identity, territory and resource conflicts (Robbins 2004; Neumann 2005). In particular, a political ecology perspective has proved invaluable insofar as it helps to guard against overgeneralizations about indigenous struggles and, as we will see with the case study of the Shuar movement, especially vis-à-vis the ambiguous relationship between indigenous organisations and indigenous communities. The thesis thus builds upon the work of Bebbington (2001) and others critical of the persistent myth of the 'noble savage' in order to emphasise the complexity and ambiguity of an indigenous politics driven by differentiated interests and strategies. The thesis notably charts the relation between oil politics and indigenous movements by examining how forms of identity construction, territoriality, resource control and governance are elaborated as a reaction to neoliberal policies and oil-based development in order to understand the dynamics of struggles in indigenous areas.

The investigation of indigenous movements looms large in political ecology. But 'indigenous movement' turns out to be a sort of key word whose meanings is always unstable and contested and wrapped up in complex ways with social and environmental problems (Seracombe and Sellato 2005; Watts 2004). Indigenous movements are typically invoked as a single unity, as an undifferentiated entity, which speak with a single voice to the state, transnational corporations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or other actors. Indigenous movements are of course nothing of the sort. Indeed, indigenous actors within a movement express quiet different sorts of social

relations and thus have to be understood in terms of inequality--not everyone participates or benefits equally in the construction and reproduction of the movement, let alone the claims made in the name of indigenous people. As social projects get under way and begin to succeed, the prospect of internal dissent within these movements is an ever-present threat--especially in a context in which powerful opponents seek to subvert their activities. The complex processes arising from this recognition of indigenous heterogeneity are discussed in Chapters 5 to 7. Here, it is important to understand generally that these internal differences have become manifested in new struggles within and between indigenous organisations and communities. As such, the thesis takes a critical stance on indigenous politics in general, and the relationship between indigenous political organisations and communities in particular.

Further, the assumption of much of the literature is that grassroots actors, such as indigenous organisations, will carry forward 'alternative' agendas (Bebbington and Bebbington 2001). Again, this is not necessarily the case. In particular, indigenous commitment to 'traditional' agro-ecological techniques often asserted to exist by social scientists and development activists is in fact often missing from the practices of some indigenous organisations, who focus on reforming dominant models of development while keeping hold of principles of local control, democratisation, and community-based 'sustainable' development. Thus, intellectual concepts and indigenous practice may differ in some respect even as they may converge over wider political objectives.

These preliminary reflections illustrate how analyses of indigenous movements can benefit from a more critical look at indigenous strategies as well as the factors underlying them. These strategies are hence not mere 'adaptations to the environment' as per early variants of cultural ecology (Bryant and Bailey 1997). They are also influenced by cultural and political logics and socio-economic exigencies. Furthermore, they may take on a form that may seem counter-intuitive--the incorporation of modern technology and administration methods as a part of cultural survival for instance. Looking more carefully at why such 'anomalous' behaviour happens addresses important questions in political ecology about the 'real world' conditions under which knowledge and practices become part of indigenous struggles in the modern era (Neuman 2005).

This introductory chapter thus begins with a brief overview of political ecology and indigenous movements. Here, the concern is to note how indigenous political organising- whether it is individualized resistance, social movements or community politics- is related to questions of access and control of natural resources and land. I then turn to the political and economic context in which (alternative) development needs to be situated in Latin America. Here, of specific concern is the intersection between indigenous organisations and the state, and how indigenous identity and culture are portrayed politically. This initial set of reflections will be elaborated in setting out the theoretical framework in Chapter 2 even as it provides an appropriate basis for the case study at the heart of this thesis. Based on extensive fieldwork conducted between June 2002 and July 2004, that case study considers how the Shuar people in the Ecuadorian Amazon (the *Oriente*[1]) emerged as viable political actors. The main focus in doing so is on a fairly short but nonetheless vital period stretching from the late 1990s to the early 2000s and this effort constitutes the first in-depth study of the Shuar struggle in southern Ecuador. The political awakening that occurred at this time comprised local political organising and development strategies, embraced ethnic and territorial claims as well as associated local resource control through sustained political engagement. These strategies have become increasingly complex and multifaceted over time, yet an underlying vision exists based on opposition by most Shuar people to oil-based development and neoliberal policies that are seen to marginalise local people, politically, economically and culturally.

1.1 Political Organising by Indigenous Movements

A central theme in political ecology since its inception has been the political and ecological oppression of indigenous people by more powerful actors such as states and businesses. The ability of indigenous people to resist the predations of the powerful is also emphasised in the work of political ecologists. Indigenous people rarely accept an oppressive fate passively (although 'adaptation' does occur), but strike out at oppressors in both covert and overt ways. Such resistance is also not new as the discussion of indigenous resistance in the colonial era demonstrates (Doolittle 2005; Guha 1989; Kathirithamby-Wells 2005; Neumann 1992; Peluso 1992; Bryant 1997a).

---

[1] The Ecuadorian Amazon is commonly known as the *Oriente.* Here this concept will be used when referring specifically to Ecuadorian Amazonian territory.

However, the recent spread of democratic political regimes in the Third World has arguably reduced the likelihood that states will respond in an especially coercive manner. An intriguing development in terms of the topography of a politicised environment since the 1980s has thus been the emergence of indigenous organisations as a political force to be reckoned with in many parts of the Third World. Ecuador affords an interesting example to explore these important shifts, both because of the organisational strength of the country's indigenous movements (an important regional referent since the 1990s) and because of the movement's ability to challenge powerful political, economic and cultural notions and practices.

Many indigenous groups have sought to fight the oppression of powerful actors through what James Scott (1985) calls 'everyday resistance'. Everyday resistance is widely resorted to by grassroots actors (indigenous people, poor farmers, shifting cultivators and the like) when open confrontation with powerful actors carries the real prospect of severe retribution. Scott (1985) highlights in the agrarian context how everyday forms of resistance are embedded in daily life rather than manifested in revolutionary events. He found that in a Malaysian village dominated by state officials and landlords, there developed covert forms of resistance such as foot dragging, false compliance, poaching and anonymous threats. In this context, the 'weak' were motivated by a sense of social in-justice and the need for survival in a context where power relations constrained open forms of resistance.

Consideration of the strategy of everyday resistance is potentially useful in overturning the myth of suppressed people as 'powerless' insofar as it shows cases of the micro-powers' that the poor can use to erode the foundations of established social and political relations. In particular, it forces us to question the view of social compliance by the weak as positive affirmation and to search for other behaviour, such as 'unremarkable' daily resistance. Scott (1990) understood such resistance as a daily expression of words, multiple meanings and complex actions. In the context of exploring indigenous struggles against the oil industry in the Ecuadorian Amazon, Scott's work offers potentially helpful insights by some Shuar acting at individual level.

Yet, as our case study will also illustrate, such micro strategies have clear limits in resisting oppression. The limitations of everyday resistance become clearer when the

technique is contrasted with formally organised indigenous movements. Whereas indigenous movements are overt and collective, everyday resistance is covert and often individual; while movements often directly challenge political and economic norms, everyday resistance does so only indirectly (Bryant and Bailey 1997; Neumann 2005; Robbins 2004). It is precisely the anonymity of everyday resistance that is its greatest strength and, paradoxically, yet also its gravest weakness. Everyday resistance may ultimately undermine a detested political or economic order, but will only do so in the long-term, if ever. As a result, the 'weapons of the weak' should not be overly romanticised in that they are "unlikely to do more than marginally affect the various forms of exploitation that peasants confront" (Scott 1985: 29-30). Thus, indigenous movements are often seen to pose a more direct challenge to the prevailing economic and political order (Watts 1998; Bryant 2000).

Indigenous movements are not a new phenomena. Indeed, in our case study there is some evidence of organising as far back as the 1960s. However, it is only since the 1980s they have become a central means by which indigenous people have sought for social justice and local control of natural resources and land. This surge in activity can be explained partly in terms of intensified social and environmental problems facing indigenous people (and other grassroots actors for that matter) and the growing ability of these movements to openly address local social and environmental problems without prior state support (Cecena 2004; Gibson et al. 2000; Ghai and Vivian 1992). Such movements develop as a collective reaction to planned or existing activities that jeopardise the livelihoods of indigenous people, even as connections to national and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are often vital to their success. Many indigenous organisations have added weight to this challenge insofar as they seek to by-pass the state altogether through local autonomy and governance (Bebbington 2004). Thus, these organisations seek to integrate environmental and development concerns in such a way as to promote long-term indigenous resource management. Ideas of 'appropriate' resource management are often embedded into their criticisms of development projects of powerful actors that they oppose.

Thus, the growth of indigenous movements can be seen to reflect a shift in wider state-society relations and the growing power and assertiveness of 'civil society' and 'social movements' vis-à-vis the state in many Third World countries since the late 1980s

(Peet and Watts 2004). That increasing role, in turn, is linked to the declining ability and/or willingness of the state to provide for public social and environmental well-being. Chapter 2 highlights literature that underscores how the state has failed for various reasons to live up to its self-proclaimed role as both as a developer and steward of the environment. Indeed, there is the perception that states have even contributed to- rather than mitigated- poverty and environmental degradation, thereby encouraging diverse groups in civil society to become assertive over social justice issues (Simmons 2002). Thus, the growth of indigenous movements largely unregulated by, and distinct from, the state poses wider questions about the shifting relationship between civil society and the state over the environment (Escobar 1995; Ghai 1992; Bebbington 2004).

The emergence of indigenous movements also relates to what Foucault (1980) describes as 'reverse discourses'--the power to oppose and even change some of the structures of domination and governance (this will be discussed in Chapter 2). Zimmerman (2001:18) examines the question of governability in this regard as the failure of the state "to totalise all social relations constituting the nation". In this situation, "the state [which is] required to maintain and extend given international and local socio-economic power relations has to exert such pressure over one or more social sectors or social configurations" (Zimmerman 2001:18). By attempting to control multiple social contradictions, however the state may create the conditions for its own opposition and resistance to a given construction of hegemonic social relations. The emergence of this challenge relates to 'points of resistance' within the network of power (Foucault 1980). As the Shuar case considered in this thesis attests, indigenous movements can challenge and even redraw the boundaries of the political as long-standing notions of appropriate political conduct by state agencies or political parties are undermined or weakened. The role of indigenous movements has also been to reveal the political essence in the everyday lives of indigenous people and hence the need for political responses (Slater 1994b).

The political ecology perspective, as selectively discussed here, is important for this thesis in order to explain the indigenous movements that have emerged in Ecuador.[2] However, the emergence of indigenous organisations, the politicisation of indigenous identity, and demands for indigenous rights to territory and resource access in Ecuador challenges historical norms and scholarly conclusions about the politication of indigenous movements in Latin America. Indeed, many scholars of indigenous people have still not reflected adequately upon the complex and multi-faceted nature of such struggles and 'modern' forms of doing indigenous politics (Bebbington and Bebbington 2001). In contrast, this thesis suggests that indigenous organisations often focus on participating in mainstream political discourses and development projects even while asserting principles of local control, autonomous governance, 'traditional' production systems, and community-based sustainable development (Bebbington 2001). Thus, it is important to carefully analysis these processes to understand the conditions under which indigenous practices and knowledge become part of a wider network of political organising. By organising politically, people may gain greater control and access to resources and land, form new relations, and acquire new identities that in turn enable new freedoms and actions.

Further, where official policies promote local participation in land and resource management, they may be well received by local communities. Importantly, these benefits are not (at least entirely) about money. This has been found, for instance where local people acquire access to 'culturally meaningful' benefits (Colchester 1992; Lawrence 2002). One such possible benefit is the opportunity to negotiate on their own terms and to meet their own needs, whether they are cultural, material or spiritual. With such 'negotiated' claims there is typically an increasing demand by local communities to influence decisions regarding local access to and management of resources and land. In many cases, indigenous people articulate the need to 'protect' resources and land in a stance that echoes some of the views of conservation-minded scientists. Yet, these self-imposed restrictions may actually be designed pragmatically to assist them in securing formal access to land and resources in the expectation that they will still be able to use local resources to improve their socio-economic situation (Neumann 2005). Indeed, it can bring local benefits across a range of social, political and environmental relations.

---

[2] Even in the past few years, there has been a boom in publications dealing with social movements and/or political ecology in Ecuador (for example, Bebbington 2004; Perreault 2003a, b; Radcliffe 2001a, b; Sawyer 1997, 2004; Selverston-Scher 2001; Yashar 1998).

Much of this can be seen by the close examination of multiple perspectives on claims to land and resources based on different discursive concerns and relations (Hajer 1995; Thompson and Rayner 1998). Thus, it is important to understand possible changes in social and political relations of perceived benefit to local communities resulting from those multiple perspectives and stances taken in indigenous struggles.

A number of implications stem from political ecology analysis of indigenous movements and which are central to this thesis. Chapter 2 offers a more detailed assessment but here key issues are noted. First, forms of access to resources and land are closely linked to the identity question. Second, identity is often articulated in the name of 'tradition' and 'culture'; however these are not stable but rather interpreted and contested by particular constituencies in favour of particular interests. Third, identity and culture can be used strategically as a way to acquire political and financial support in order to further access and control various forms of property. Fourth, to the extent that indigenous movements can be understood as complex 'fields of powers' they are accordingly differentiated socially, politically and economically. Fifth, indigenous communities are rarely isolated, which means that the fields of power are typically non-local in key ways (for example, local communities in the pay of the state or oil companies or indigenous organisations working together with national and international NGOs). And, not the least, indigenous movements have to be rendered politically and understood as consisting of multiple and contrasting interests and alliances (Li 2004). This can be termed 'stakeholders'--a curiously weak term--but often what is at stake is the identification of different forms of political power and authority. This discussion, in turn, appropriately frames the empirical concerns of this thesis that are taken up in chapters 4-7. As such, the emergence of indigenous movements and political organising that proclaims and promotes indigenous identity and rights constitutes a phenomena that merits explanation in its own right--let alone as a process that increasingly shapes wider social and political processes.

1.2 Culture, Identity and Politics

To understand the political dynamics of indigenous movements is to appreciate how they are related to the interaction of cultural identity politics. This thesis therefore explores the different ways in which indigenous people have mobilised around

indigenous culture and identity in order to challenge the prevailing political order. The indigenous movements that are considered here are those that explicitly construct a political strategy for the defence of culture and identity linked to particular places and territories.

This concern of the thesis reflects a wider historical trend. In the 1980s a new form of identity politics emerged in Latin America, most notably among indigenous people. This politics rejected previous national and populist projects as well as traditional leftist articulations of identity based on class that had pigeonholed rural indigenous people as *campesinos* (peasants), and that had left class-conscious outside leaders as the mediators of their voice and vision (Selverston-Scher 1994). In contrast, the new politics of mobilisation is based on the agency of indigenous people themselves in which ethnic differences are seen to be central to identity as well as the recognition and re-articulation of what Mignolo (2000b) refers to as colonial difference, colonial legacies, and ethnic struggle.[3] In Latin America, indigenous people have thus sought to transform social and political structures of the past, mostly associated with a subordinated segregation characteristic of colonial times, and policies of *indigenismo* by politically strengthening collective indigenous identities (both national and transnational) (Assies et al. 2001). The concept of *indigeneity* has proved critical here. This concept describes a political discourse of indigenous citizenship as a post-colonial response to historical subjugation of indigenous people, as well as to their displacement from an imaginary of the nation-state in which they live (Quijano 2000; see also Chapter 5).

The challenge faced by indigenous movements in Latin America is to respond in a concrete way to a long history of exclusion and marginalisation linked to oppressive political and economic conditions in a way that simultaneously strengthens cultural identity and political opportunities. In fact, the strategic politicisation of identity and culture by indigenous movements takes on new significance in the current climate of globalisation. At a time of the alleged crisis and erosion of the nation-state and of neoliberal projects that transform capitalism, indigenous strategies are also symbolic and cultural as well as economic (Guardiola-Rivera 2000). This significance resides, in

---

[3] For an important and critical discussion of the category of 'class' and the current trend to make it more one link in a chain of identities associated with the new social movements, see Laclau (2000).

part, in the articulation of an emergent and highly reflective and self-conscious subjectivity within the movements and articulated by their leaders. The broad aim has been the incorporation of ethnic concerns within the existing nation-state structure. At the same time, however, the goal is to bring into question the very concepts, constructs and institutions of the state, such as citizenship, democracy, and nation (Doolittle 2005; Guardiola-Rivera 2002; Saldaana-Portillo 2003).

In the context of this study, it is indeed not surprising that the Ecuadorian state has sought to control indigenous movements. However, the latter have begun to exercise a new form of politics and agency within a cultural framework, thereby attempting to enter the sphere of governance on their own terms as we shall see. The mobilisations of the late 1990s, accompanied with demands for legal recognition of territorial rights and a 'plurinational' state, forced the state not only to take into account the indigenous movements and to award collective land titles, but also to seek ways in which to incorporate indigenous opposition into the state apparatus itself (Sawyer 2004). Connected as they are to a larger matrix of Ecuadorian, Latin American, and indeed global indigenous and environmental organising, these struggles are nevertheless situated within and build upon an indigenous politics in Ecuador that seeks to transform indigenous people's place in the nation (Howitt 2001).

Some scholars have thus turned their attention to the notion of cultural politics, or the process enacted when sets of social actors, shaped by and embodying different cultural meanings and practices, come into conflict with each other. Yet, Escobar (1998:64) argues that this definition is inadequate in that it "assumes that meanings and practices can be the source of processes that must be accepted as political. This is rarely seen as such because of entrenched definitions of the political". This is particularly the case with those practices that are theorised as marginal, alternative and emergent in relation to dominant cultural order. Culture is political because meanings are processes that explicitly or implicitly seek to redefine social and political power (Alvarez et al. 1998; Dagnino 1998). Thus, when indigenous movements deploy alternative conceptions of identity, development, democracy and citizenship that unsettle dominant cultural meanings, they enact cultural politics.

Cultural politics is implicated when examining the politics of indigenous movements because social movement research involves situations in which the interrelations between everyday life, political practice and social relations need to be effectively integrated (Escobar 1998; Slater 1998). When people practice their everyday lives, they are thereby reproducing or creating culture. At the same time, there is here a collective act of creation- a *collective* signification- that is cultural and it is out of this process that people actually define and elaborate their struggles (Alvarez et al. 1998). The challenge is thus simultaneously cultural, political, symbolic and material (Escobar 2001). Indigenous movements may enact cultural struggles over meaning. At the same time, however, these meanings, as well as what the fight is about, are not always clear or universally agreed upon.[4]

Further, Moore et al. (2003:2) suggest that cultural politics is an approach that treats culture itself as a site for political struggle, "an analytic emphasising power, processes and practice". Cultural practices are thus politically resonant-- they forge communities, reproduce inequalities, and acquit exclusions. Yet, they also provide the means by which those very effects are challenged. Cultural politics insists that such struggles are simultaneously material and symbolic (Moore et al. 2003). Thus, cultural politics is an attempt to make visible strategies originating in cultural practices, and in particular the ways in which local people, far from being passive recipients of transnational conditions, actively shape the process of identity construction (Alvarez et al. 1998).

Work by Stuart Hall (1990) notably illustrates the importance of cultural politics when he examines the processes of collective identity construction by Caribbean and Afro-British identities. For Hall, ethnic identity construction is on the one hand rooted in shared cultural practices, a collective self of sorts. This conception of identity has played an important role in anti-colonial struggles and involves the imaginary recovery of culture that leads to adherence to the experience of oppression. On the other hand, identity is seen in terms of contingent differences created by history. This aspect of identity construction emphasises becoming rather than being, positioning rather than essence, and discontinuity as well as continuity at the cultural level. Thus, identity is seen in both ways, as anchored in 'traditional' practices and forms of knowledge, but as

---

[4] This is also evident in the Shuar case study presented in this thesis. In Chapter 5, the aim is to examine the ways in which the Shuar federations have responded to these challenges in order to secure resources, territorial and political rights, and how the construction of cultural identity relates to this process.

always a changing project of cultural and political construction. This will also be seen in the Shuar case study featured in this thesis. Here we will see how different forms of culturally-based resistance have also been used with one such form being that of political mobilisation organised around the calculated assertion of cultural identity.

Indeed, an indigenous group's self-identification as indigenous is neither natural nor inevitable, nor is it simply invented, adopted or imposed (Li 2004). It is, rather, articulated and used in a way that draws upon culturally-based local practices, landscapes, and meanings, and emerges through particular patterns of engagement and struggle. The conjunctures at which the indigenous come to identify themselves as such, realigning thereby the ways they connect to the nation, the state, transnational corporations and often civil society groups, are contingent products of agency as well as cultural and political work of articulation.[5] Thus, the politics surrounding indigenous identity (often referred to as *indigeneity*), and its consequences for rights, resources and the formation of alliances, highlights the urgent need for new ways to conceptualise identity that are theoretically more adequate to the diversity of conditions and struggles in the Ecuadorian Amazon, as well as being alert to the risks and opportunities posed by particular discourses propounded by external actors.

Indeed, in our case study, there is evidence of these cultural and political challenges. These complexities were also readily apparent in the early years of the national umbrella organisation for the Ecuadorian indigenous people, the *Confederación de las Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador* (CONAIE). In June 1990, CONAIE mobilised indigenous people against official apathy towards their needs, demanding state support for and recognition of indigenous cultural difference (Macas 1991; Bebbington 2004). This act of protest asserted the values of 'traditional' indigenous identity, yet at the same time made demands for a full incorporation of indigenous people into Ecuador's development process as their right as national citizens. It thus supported the continuation and recovery of cultural traditions *and* demanded access to the means of rural modernisation via the technologies and institutions of the national centre. During

---

[5] Articulation is a key word within political ecology since it recognises the structured character of different social groups, production systems and ideologies, but highlights the ways in which these are brought together, changed, and articulated at particular conjunctures (see Li 2004). Conjuncture is another key word: it challenges us to consider the ways geographies and the micro-politics of livelihood struggles intersect with constructions of landscape, livelihood and identity generated across multiple scales (see Moore 1998).

this period CONAIE was transformed from a marginal social movement into a national political actor by using a variety of strategies to achieve substantive policy gains and a dramatic increase in political representation, thereby becoming one of the region's most successful social movements (Castells 2004). With few material resources, CONAIE developed an alternative model of national identity and economic development and broke up the elite monopoly on political representation (Selverston-Scher 2001).[6]

These empirical phenomena demand analysis and explanation and complicate greatly the notion of indigenous movements as being only acts of resistance or as only the defence of 'traditional' culture. A whole range of complex articulations and identities are clearly at stake and merit further attention in political ecology analyses, as this thesis suggests. A difficult question here is to decide what it means to be 'indigenous' (a highly contested category and one might as well add 'tribe' or 'ethnicity')[7] in the context of new relationships with the state, transnational corporations, non-governmental organisations, and markets. How does a notion of 'indigenous' come to resonate in a particular place and time? How does it relate to political struggles and how might it help to reconfigure alliances? Who is privileged and who is left out through such labelling? These are important questions to any rigorous understanding of indigenous politics and hence are explored in detail in this thesis.

Thus, the aim of this thesis is to extend arguments in political ecology by examining the hybrid and complex relations between the state, oil-based development, indigenous movements, cultural identity, territoriality, resource and property conflicts and some social forms of contention in particular resource settings. Social conflict over physical things like land and petroleum has been about much more than the materiality of their use.[8] Struggle over the control of land and oil operations in Ecuador has been as much about challenging neoliberalism as it has been about the material use and extraction of

---

[6] Selverston-Scher's work falls within the social movement approach. Like most scholars in the late 1990s, she uses both 'strategy' and 'identity' approaches within this literature (see also Foweraker 1995), but her main focus is on the use of collective identity as a strategic resource.

[7] For example, the UN, the ILO and the World Bank have differing approaches to the definition of indigenous people. The complexity of the legal debate raised around the category is reflected in the vast panoply of national, international and inter-state institutional mechanisms deployed and the on-going debate over non-dominance, special connections to land/territory and continuity based on historical priority (Castree 2004; Peet and Watts 2004).

[8] For insightful scholarship on the simultaneity of material and symbolic struggles with reference to oil, see Coronil (1997), Karl (1997), and Watts (1997, 2001). In other contexts, see Berry (1993); Moore (1996a), 1996b, 1998), Peluso and Watts (2001), and Schroeder (1999).

natural resources. The elaboration of such analysis is a valid and important task, not the least because in doing so, it suggests that the politics of indigenous movements need to be taken seriously in all of its complexity and not simply as a 'reaction' by 'traditional' actors.

1.3 Thesis Focus

The discussion in this chapter has sought to set out the key concerns of this thesis, noting possible contributions to be derived from this study of indigenous oil-related struggle in Ecuador's Amazonia. It remains here to set out the structure of the thesis. Thus, the next chapter will establish the theoretical framework elaborating points made in the overview presented above by exploring selectively key research in political ecology and new social movements studies. That framework is understood in terms of a three-fold structure--namely cultural-identity politics, territory and place, and resource access. In turn, this theoretical framework enables an empirical exploration of the extent to which these elements provide political opportunities for indigenous people to assert identity claims, indigenous territoriality and place-based claims, and access to and control of resources and land. By exploring these potential opportunities through a case study of Shuar struggles notably linked to oil development, an assessment of the possible analytical relevance of indigenous identity constructions, notions of territoriality, and ideas about resource struggles can be made.

Chapter 3 presents the methodology used in the thesis--specifically, an ethnographic approach with participatory research methods. The discussion here also illustrates the strengths and weaknesses of the methodological approach followed in the light of actual field experience. By providing a background to Shuar struggles and political organising against oil-based development, Chapter 4 examines the historical context in which oil development and land reforms took place there. It also describes the current political and economic climate in Ecuador, which has had a major effect upon the Shuar people and their battles.

Having presented essential background to the Ecuadorian case, it is then possible to undertake detailed empirical investigation in keeping with the framework set out in Chapter 2. Chapter 5 thus explores the reciprocal links and tensions between politics

and culture in the construction of Shuar identity in an age of proposed oil development, and how the Shuar federations have been quite successful in some respects in forging a modern and even powerful movement strategically steeped in the assertion of Shuar culture. And yet, culturally-based strategies do not exhaust the array of ways in which Shuar federations interact with local communities as well as with powerful outsiders in their quest to assert Shuar autonomy.

The focus in Chapter 6 is thus on understanding the geographical building blocks of the Shuar struggle-- specifically territory and place. Control over territory is the key political motivating force of Shuar mobilisation and processes of territorial control and associated land-based conflicts are central to Shuar strategies of resistance as a reaction to oil development. Local claims to land are partly related to local place-based relations. These place-based relations are also important in constituting a local sense of place. As such, place is assessed here to understand how territorial initiatives are devised in light of the senses of place articulated by different Shuar groups in the region.

At the heart of this intensifying multi-scale struggle is the attempt by state-backed oil developers to dispossess Shuar communities of their lands and resources-- in effect to undermine their way of life by severing essential links to the biophysical environment. In Chapter 7, then, the focus is on how Shuar struggles for local resource control and authority has been designed to combat successive waves of outsider-imposed 'development'. Here, the crucial aspect of access, and how the Shuar struggle needs to be understood as being contested on this vital ingredient of indigenous life, is the focus of attention.

Finally, Chapter 8 summarises the theoretical and empirical findings of the thesis before concluding with an assessment of the broader implications of the study. Here, the elements of a future research agenda are briefly and selectively discussed.

Chapter 2 Theoretical Framework

The previous chapter introduced the idea that there are various notions of resistance and struggle in the scholarly literature with reference to indigenous people while establishing that the basic approach of this thesis is derived from the political ecology and social movement literatures. Here the main conceptual themes of the study are explored in greater depth as the theoretical framework is elaborated. In doing so, the discussion is related to Latin America in order to ensure that the theoretical relevance to the region of study is maintained. Overall, then, the aim of this chapter is to develop a nuanced and region-specific theoretical framework for the subsequent Ecuadorian investigation.

Chapter 2 is structured as follows. The first section explains the increasing political salience of social movements in Latin America by analysing the consequences of changing state-society relations which served as a catalyst for the emergence of indigenous movements throughout the region. Here, a political ecology approach linked to social movement theory is adopted. Thereafter, the chapter uses relevant literature to establish the threefold theoretical structure of the thesis, namely 1) the relationship between cultural politics and ethnic identity questions; 2) territory and place; and 3) access to and control of natural and material resources that are emerging from the struggles of 'new' indigenous movements.

2.1 The Political Ecology of Social Movements

The growth of environmental and social problems worldwide has been associated with the emergence of social movements in political-ecological conflicts. Although few parts of the world have been untouched by this process, it is largely in the Third World that the political impact of movements has been the greatest. Accordingly, the influence of this type of actor on the changing topography of the politicised environment in the Third World is coming under increasing scrutiny by policy-makers and scholars alike. This section thus explores the growing significance of social movements--what are the spaces within which these movements develop, and how do they articulate with other organisations even as they often seek to resist the predations of states and businesses? The relationship between social movements and states is considered as part of a broader evaluation of whether the advent of social movements signifies a new politics of the

environment in the Third World. This discussion, in turn, appropriately frames the empirical concerns of this thesis that are taken up in detail in Chapters 4-7.

A large literature now exists in political ecology and allied fields on the interconnections of the 'new' social movements, civil society, empowerment and democratisation (for example, Alvarez et al. 1998; Bebbington and Batterby 2001; Bryant and Bailey 1997; Escobar 2001; Forsyth 2002; Neumann 2005; Peet and Watts, 1996, 2004; Robbins 2004; Rocheleau et al. 1996; Stott and Sullivan 2000; Yashar 2005; Zimmerer et al. 2003). In particular, these studies underscore the important contribution of social movements to political and cultural transformation, notably in terms of democratisation and expanded political opportunities (see also Foweraker 1985; Slater 1994a, b). Social movements were thought to give expression to new interests, to practice new ways of doing politics and even to create a new possibility of empowering the poor. In their continuous struggles against hegemonic projects of nation building, development, and 'security', social movements are seen to mobilise on the ground people with very different sets of meanings and interests from elites (Jasper 1997). Generally speaking, social movements (defined below) are thus seen to be engaged in "political struggles over access to the mechanisms of power but also cultural struggle in the search for different identities" (Jelin 1990: 206).

In exploring the emergence of social movements (especially so-called 'new social movements') as a significant focus of attention in contemporary scholarship, three main factors can be mentioned. First, the term 'new social movements' has been used to describe the kind of social activism that emerged in Europe and North America during the 1960s and which was closely associated with new identity-based politics, such as women's rights, gay rights and peace campaigns. They were called 'new' because they were seen to differ from old social movements based on material interests often represented by different economic classes (Dussel 2000; Morris and Mueller 1992). Many scholars have argued that new social movements are both the symptoms of, and solutions to, the contradictions inherent in modern bureaucratic society and emerge because of tensions between the regulation of society by the state and the emerging autonomy and diversity of identities experienced in post-industrial societies (Habermas 1981; Jasper 1997; Offe 1985; Touraine 1981).

Second, there has been a growing post-structural interest in questions of agency and subjectivity (Bryant 1992; Slater 1994b). This started with the realisation that the dominant frameworks of the past- especially neo-Marxist theories that had long underpinned social movement theorising- were at an impasse (Booth 1994). In the wake of mounting dissatisfaction with 'traditional' Marxist class analysis, the issue of the constitution of social actors and their potential relation to collective action and political change became increasingly central (Lander 2000; Palmero 2001). The 'old' is thus characterised by analysis in terms of 'modernisation' and 'dependency' theories, by definitions of politics that were anchored in 'traditional' actors who struggled for the control of the state (particularly the working class and revolutionary front) and by a view that society consisted of structures and class relations that only large-scale development schemes or upheavals could alter (Alvarez et al. 1992, 1998; Calderon 1992; Cohen 1985; Cohen and Arato 1992; Davis et al. 2005; Slater 1985). In contrast, 'new' theories see contemporary social movements as bringing about a substantial transformation in the very nature of political practice and state-society relations. New analyses focus instead on the complexities of social life- including their political, social, cultural, spatial and temporal aspects--and how such complexities negate 'simplistic' explanation.

Third, controversy surrounding the potential political relevance of social movements, and how these movements challenge conventional notions of democracy, has tended to flow into and reinforce discussions of the shifting nature of state-society relations (Alvarez et al. 1992; Jasper 1997; Whittier et al. 2002). Indeed, since the 1980s Latin America has witnessed the appearance of new understandings of social change and resistance that have marked a significant break with past forms of analysis and practice. These new forms of awareness have been matched by equally significant changes in popular practices and collective action. Attention then has focused on understanding the complex processes that account for momentous social, political, and economic changes that are taking place in Latin America today (Bebbington 2004).

Clearly much depends here on what the researcher means by a 'social movement'. Touraine's (1988) analysis of collective action is well known and useful in this regard. He argues that society is a result of a complex set of actions that society performs upon itself involving actors who may have conflictual interests but who nonetheless share

certain cultural orientations. Social movements are therefore not 'dramatic events' but rather "the work society performs upon itself" (Touraine 1981:29). The goal of such work is to control *historicity* which is defined as "the set of cultural models that rule social practices" (Touraine 1988: 8) and is embodied in knowledge, economic and ethical models.

According to Touraine (1988: 68), the distinctive qualities of social movements are clear. Thus, it is "an action, both culturally oriented and socially conflicted, of a class defined by its position of domination or dependency in the mode of appropriation of historicity, of the cultural models of investment, knowledge and morality towards which the social movement itself is oriented". In this view, most forms of collective mobilisation in Latin America are not therefore social movements proper but rather struggles for control of the process of historical change through political participation. This definition of social movements helps us to understand how indigenous movements have emerged as a viable political force in Ecuador, notably by participating in the political system.

However, as Melucci (1988a) pointed out, Touraine does not explain the process by which actors build a collective *identity* through interactions, negotiations and relationships with the environment, but rather treats this aspect as an already accomplished fact. Melucci argues that, rather than assuming the existence of a relatively unified collective actor, actors construct common actions and identity via a process (and not as a fact or event). As he pointed out, concepts proposed by resource mobilisation theory (such as structure and opportunity[1]) are not really 'objective' realities since they "imply the capacity of the actors to perceive, evaluate and determine the possibilities and limits afforded by the environment" (Melucci 1988a: 342). Thus, the question of identity construction is crucial: "Collective identity is an interactive and shared definition produced by several individuals and concerned with the orientation of action and the field of opportunities and constraints in which action takes place" (Melucci1988a: 342). Melucci also pointed out the crucial network of relationships that underlie collective action. Contemporary action "assumes the form of networks submerged in everyday life" (Melucci 1988b: 248). Social movements in this way

[1] Resource mobilization theory explores simultaneously the institutional, structural and cultural-symbolic resources of social movements (Jenkins 1983; Johnston and Klandermans 1995; McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996; Tarrow 1994).

cannot be understood independently from the 'submerged' social and cultural background from which they emerge (Escobar 1995).

A sense of the key role performed by the process of articulation in such identity construction is adhered by Laclau and Mouffe (1985). For these authors, social change, the nature of political spaces, and historical transformations are fundamentally discursive, endowed with and apprehended through meaning which can never be fixed but rather is constantly contested. This has consequences for understanding the making of collective identities. Actors construct collective identity through the interaction, negotiation and opposition of different perceptions and such construction depends notably on how they define those situations susceptible to common action. Because all these perspectives are ripe with meaning, actors must inevitably build collective identities through an *articulation* of meaning (Laclau and Mouffe 1985). These articulations may result in the formation of collective identity and collective mobilisations which take place in different forms at the 'centre' and at the 'periphery' of the capitalist economy. This process can be linked to democratic struggles but only "in societies in which democratic revolution has crossed a certain threshold" (Laclau and Mouffe 1985: 166)--in other words, it is suggested, in 'developed' countries.

Further, the ability to devise a political strategy is predicated on certain preconditions called 'political opportunity structures'. Tarrow (1994:85) suggests these are "consistent- but not necessarily formal or permanent- dimensions of the political environment that provide incentives for people to undertake collective action" (see also Kitschelt 1986; McAdam et al. 1996). The concern in this thesis is specifically about shifts in resources external to indigenous organisations that affect their prospects, such as new allies, political alignments, and divisions within and between communities and leaders, as well as wider access to national decision-making structures. While political opportunity structures condition institutional prospects, these structures are themselves not rigid. As Jasper (1997:36) notes: "the term structure misleadingly implies relatively fixed entities, so that attention is often diverted away from open-ended strategic interplay". It is important to note that while political opportunity structures rarely determine the details of indigenous strategies they certainly condition the networks through which they operate (Bryant 2005). In the case of organisations that involve state-transnational-community linkages, it is influence and prestige, coupled with

authority and money, which frame the forms of governance as well as who participates and benefits from particular forms. The attraction here, as political ecologists highlight, is that it addresses the means by which differentiated social actors gain access to and control over resources through institutionalised practices and political strategies (Brosius et al. 1998; Diani et al. 2003; Leach et. al. 1997; Li 2004; Robbins 2004).

Much discussion in political ecology has pointed to the positive role played by social movements- or a vibrant civil society in general- in forming a more ecologically aware or more socially just form of development (Forsyth 2002; Neumann 2005; Paulson and Gexon 2005; Peet and Watts 2004). Some in political ecology are optimistic about the ability of new social movements to reframe policy and associated discourses in favour of marginalised groups. The social activism that emerged from the issues discussed above was placed squarely on the agenda by local people themselves, including indigenous movements. Exploring the demands for participation, autonomy and democratisation around the world (such as the Zapatistas in Chiapas, Mexico, or the Miskito of Honduras or Nicaragua) and analysing the livelihood conditions, moral economies and political exigencies of regional life that propel them, forms the core of social movement research in political ecology (Cecena 2004; Robbins 2004; Rochlin 2003).

Changes in environmental management regimes and conditions have created opportunities or imperatives for local groups to represent themselves politically. Such moves often represent new forms of political action since their ecological strands connect disparate groups across class, ethnicity and gender. In this way, local social and environmental conditions and interactions have delimited, modified and blunted otherwise seemingly omnipotent global political and economic forces. In this sense, therefore, social movements draw together disparate communities and interests into collective awareness, and help thereafter to facilitate collective action. Here, communities assert their identity notably through the way they make a living. Drawing on a paradigm case of the struggle for rights of indigenous people in Jharkhand, India, Parajuli (1998) has described this as a form of 'ecological ethnicity'.

Yet, Forsyth (2002) argues that these approaches- such as those involving notions of ecological rationality, advocacy coalitions or 'liberation ecologies' (for example,

Martinez-Alier 2001; Peet and Watts 2004)- do not pay sufficient attention to the co-production of activism and the multi-faceted knowledge that is used to add legitimacy to campaigns. As a consequence, new social movements may simply replicate and reinforce pre-existing structures of environmental knowledge rather than reframe them in a way more favourable to marginalised groups. Here too, therefore, there is a need to understand the complex and multi-faceted nature of social movements. This thesis thus maintains a critical stance on the possible impacts of social movements in achieving social justice by examining one such movement with an eye to illustrating the multi-faceted and highly complex nature of indigenous political organising.

A theoretical perspective that draws on both social movement literature and political ecology, as selectively discussed here, is therefore important for this thesis in order to explain how indigenous movements have emerged and operate in Ecuador. The emergence of indigenous organisations, the politicisation of indigenous identity, and demands for indigenous rights over the past two decades in particular have challenged historical norms and scholarly conclusions about the politicisation of indigenous movements in Latin America (Bebbington 2004; Eckstein et al. 2001; Van Cott 1999; Warren et al. 2003; Yashar 2005). Indeed, historical records suggest that in much of the twentieth century indigenous people rarely sustained social movements that demanded indigenous rights and emphasised indigenous identity. On the contrary, rural organising within and between indigenous groups has traditionally been related to peasant unions, political parties, churches and revolutionaries. These movements have tended to mobilise indigenous people to forge class, religious and/or revolutionary identities that ignored indigenous identities. Accordingly, scholars have generally underscored the weak politicisation of ethnic identity in Latin America which had comparatively little explicit impact on political organising (see for example, Horowitz 1985).

However, the increasingly *political* nature of indigenous movements recently has attracted particular attention from new social movement theorists precisely because of the interesting contribution of culture, identity and politics at stake in these struggles. By the mid-1990s, work on Latin American movements had moved beyond the class-based peasant studies of prior decades to embrace 'new' social movements that appreciated the ethnic and cultural dimensions of indigenous resistance. Scholars thus probed how the construction of meaning and identity shaped indigenous political

action. They also studied indigenous political struggles as a means toward understanding wider change, notably the quality of democracy in Latin America (see Appelbaum 2003; Appelbaum et al. 2003; Andolina 1999; Collins 2000; De la Cadena 2000; Garfield 2001; Rubin 1998; Saldaana-Portillo 2003; Van Cott 2000; Yashar 1998, 1999). More and more, the arena of the nation-state and the relationship between indigenous people and nation-states has become the centre of analytic as well as political activity for social scientists.[2]

Much analysis of indigenous movements has tended to emphasise either the class of rural movements (Petras and Veltmeyer 2001) or the identity politics involved in their mobilisation (Esteva 1999; Alvarez et al. 1998). Barta and Otero (2005) argue meanwhile that in most social movements, but particularly so in the case of indigenous struggles, material (resources and land) and identity (culture) demands are inseparable. Indeed, indigenous identity and culture are anchoring points for the struggle for resources and land. Indigenous ethnicities have long been reproduced in a subordinate interaction with political and economic elites, and such reproduction has depended primarily on the regulation of access to land and resources (Otero 2004). Thus, indigenous movements are in no simple sense 'environmental' since they typically combine human rights, identity/culture and questions of social justice (Escobar 1995).

Slater (1985), for example, has viewed them as types of protest against traditional *mestizo* politics, in particular against the excessive concentration of decision-making power in national and regional capitals as well as the incapacity of the state to deliver needed services to indigenous people living in peripheral areas. In this sense they can be seen to be a consequence of the legitimacy problems of the state itself. As Bebbington (2004) points out, movements are also cultural insofar as they are expressions of long-dominated and marginalised identities-- identities that are at the same time reformulated through the activity of the movement (see also Perreault 2003b). For example, in Ecuador the recovery and projection of the idea of being indigenous has been a form of resisting forms of *mestizo* domination and of regaining a space for the values of being indigenous (Bebbington 1991; Yashar 1998; see Chapter 5 below).

---

[2] As Field (1994) observed, anthropologists had also become increasingly focused on indigenous resistance to the nation-state by the early 1990s. Political resistance, in fact, had become "the primary characteristic of [*Indian*] ethnicity" in their eyes (Field 1994:239).

As such, the emergence of 'new' indigenous movements and political organising constitutes a phenomenon that merits explanation in its own right even though acknowledging its possible wider impacts. To flesh out the theoretical setting of the thesis, this chapter will now consider in turn the three specific elements that in aggregate constitute the framework of this thesis--namely, culture-identity politics, territory and place, as well as resource access. First of all, indigenous movements will be examined in-depth in order to highlight how culture and identity have become embedded in their strategies.

2.2 Cultural Politics and Ethnic Identity

The cultural politics of indigenous struggle is closely related to a specific history of state policies and practices. State reforms have combined with political liberalisation and existing power networks to prompt the emergence of Latin America's new social movements. Indeed, Tilley (1988) has argued generally, many states have implemented reforms that have initiated an incomplete process of democratisation; while democratisation has expanded political opportunities for civil society, weak state institutions have nonetheless often restricted political access, participation and local autonomy for historically marginalised groups. Excluded from political cultures as well as local governance structures, indigenous people have thus mobilised around their indigenous identity in order to challenge the prevailing political order.

There is a long history of exclusion from national politics and culture based on the legacy of Spanish colonialism and/or subsequent forms of European and American neo-colonial influence (Dean et al. 2003; Hansen and Stepputet 2001; Mignolo 2000b). Regardless of how indigenous people perceived themselves, colonial states and their functionaries insisted that the only relevant means of identifying indigenous people was through national schema that were fundamentally alien to them. Thus, they were placed at the bottom of the economic, political, and cultural ladder under the supervision of *blancos* (white) and *mestizos* (mixed-race), who defined their own identities in terms of being superior to them. In short, indigenous people were denied citizenship (Beck and

Mijeski 2000; Silverblatt 1995).[3] This process of national identity formation was designed in part to ensure forced assimilation into national culture of indigenous people thereby denying them recognition of their own identity and by extension, the possibility of a separate national identity (Hale 1994).[4]

During the second half of the twentieth century, Latin American states aimed to 'modernise' and 'develop' their countries. This aim intensified political tensions by claiming that the fundamental obstacle to modernisation was the 'backwardness' of indigenous and other non-white citizens (Quijano 2000). Thus, state ideologies sought to end resistance among indigenous people through their assimilation to dominant Western culture and *mestizo* populist ideology (Mignolo 2000a). The *Indian* was henceforth called *campesino* even as 'traditional' indigenous culture was condemned. Confronted with diverse ethnic populations, most Latin American states promoted assimilation, while maintaining labour markets segmented along ethnic lines (Acosta 2001; Sissons 2005). The solution contained in 'development' and 'modernisation' programmes therefore was to gradually erase all that was indigenous and non-white. Latin American states' discourses thereby coincided in their attempts to use *Indian*, or the imagined *Indian,* as traditional object against which to construct modernist '*imagined communities*' (Anderson 1983) which informed state policies and associated nationalism.

For example, ethnic politics in post-colonial Ecuador has been strongly determined by the promotion of ethnic assimilation and the inclusion of indigenous people in the construction of a unitary and homogenous state (Vickers 1992). Where national citizens did not exist, they would forge them through centrally-encouraged identity formation. As Chapters 4 and 6 investigate, this was largely done by land reforms that 'removed' indigenous people from exploitative forms of labour control, occasionally distributed land and credit, and incorporated them into the national project through peasant associations. As a result, state and union organisations imposed a class identity on indigenous people as the price of political incorporation and access to resources

---

[3] *Indígena* and *mestizo* are social categories and they are based as much on external distinction, formed within specific socio-political context, as on self-definition. The glorification of *mestizo* identity as the 'substance of the nation' was an essential part of the ideology of the state and one that appealed to powerful middle and upper income groups (Ströbele-Gregor 1996).

[4] National identity was also based on faith through the help of missionary foundations who subjected indigenous populations to a regime of legal guardianship and a racist ideology that supported elite claims to national ethnic superiority (Perrechon 2003).

(Guardiola-Rivera 2002). The registration of peasant communities and the growth of peasant federations, in particular, fostered the fiction that the state had turned indigenous people into peasants and stripped indigenous ethnicity of its identity (Perreault 2001). As Guardiola-Rivera (2002) notes, national politicians and constitutions have either assumed ethnic homogeneity of the nation's populace or disregarded ethnic diversity as a legitimate form of political identity.

The development process was a key part of this nationalist project in Latin America. Thus, Garfield (2001) notes how Brazilian officials presented Brazilian nationality as an already finalised entity that was threatened by feudal modes of production and ethnic separatism. In fact, the very emergence of the nation-state and national identity was contingent on the reproduction of capitalist social relations and the elimination of cultural differences (Chatterjee 1993). Development was said to be based on the premise of collective will, transcending regional and particular interests and benefiting all members of the nation, in the 'national interest' of the country. As Hobsbawn (1990:10) asserts "Nations do not make states and nationalisms, but the other way around". The recasting of the 'nation' from a formless social mass to the idea of the state as a consolidated and unified entity represented one of the long-term successes of state officials however much it has recently begun to be challenged (Garfield 2001; Kearny and Varese 1995).

State planners paid particular attention to indigenous people. Enjoining them to surrender territorial control and political autonomy in the 'national interest', state planners asserted their exclusive 'know-how' and capacity to engender '*better Indians*'[5] (farmers, rural labourers, market consumers, and patriotic citizens) as adequate justification for their actions. As a part of this process, elites employed biologically and culturally deterministic notions of *indigenismo* to legitimise power and neutralise opposition. Thus, past state policies sought to assimilate indigenous people into national mainstreams but in a way that created structural conditions that entrenched their marginalisation and oppression. Because contemporary power relations are rooted in these historical processes, the status of indigenous people has always invoked larger

[5] This was a common terminology used by state officials in Ecuador.

questions about the organisation and power of the state (Appelbaum et al. 2003; Van Cott 2003).[6]

Historical inequality was exacerbated in the 1980s when international lenders required Latin American governments to slash social welfare programs and public employment to avert fiscal catastrophe and debt default. The shift to neoliberal policies thus followed and informed the structural adjustment policies (SAPs) that have drastically cut back on social services and goods that were designed to secure a basic social standard of living for all, notably including indigenous people (Yashar 1999). As Chapter 4 relates, the Ecuadorian state privatised land and resources, designed new development projects to intensify export production, eliminated trade barriers and agricultural subsidies, and reduced social service and environmental programs--all as part of the structural adjustment programs and all of which had adverse effects on indigenous people in the country.

However, as this thesis amply documents, indigenous people have started to challenge state-designed development projects and neoliberal policies thereby calling into question the *indigenismo* policies-- exposing them as constituting a prolonged act of discrimination. In the process, they have brought into question the very concepts, constructs and institutions of the state (Brysk 1996; Alvarez et al. 1992; Melucci 1989). Using a variety of theoretical approaches, the literature explain how indigenous people in Latin America struggle for the survival of their historically rooted yet constantly changing cultures; for title to and control over traditionally-held territories; for the right to define themselves individually and collectively in relation to other groups in society; for the right to control representations of the *Indian* that are offered by non-indigenous intellectuals, the state or others; for access to economic resources to maintain their preferred methods of economic production; for the right to participate in public decision-making as individual citizens and as collectively recognised 'people' or 'nations'; and for the right to be indigenous *and* a full and equal citizen of the Latin American nation-state within which they reside (for example, see Berry 2000; Assies

---

[6] The forthcoming book by De Oliveria et al. (2006) examines the experiences and perceptions of indigenous people in the context of the national states and political systems that have been externally imposed and implemented upon them, and it discusses indigenous territories, concepts of political autonomy and sovereignty that have been used to describe and construe indigenous political projects.

and Hoekema 2001; Carvalho 2000; Grandin 2000; Selverston-Scher 1994; Stonich 2001; Ticona 2000; Van Cott 1994, 2000; Van der Haar 1998).

In the process, indigenous people and their struggle to maintain their cultures and identities have become a central concern of scholars. For example, de la Cadena (2000) examines changing forms of identity construction among indigenous people of the Peruvian highlands and considers how the development of *Indian*, *mestizo* and peasant identities help to explain why contemporary Peruvian indigenous movement organisations have been slower to form and are organisationally weaker than in other regional countries. Similarly, Garfield (2001) shows how Brazil's Xavante people adapted to the physical intrusion of the state and non-indigenous settlers and how they mobilised their identity politically to contest the nation- and state-building projects of the modern Brazilian state: "The violent and convoluted process whereby the Xavante, stripped of autonomy, *learned* and articulated that their ethnicity was a political marker that restricted or accorded them rights as indigenous people and Brazilian citizens" (Garfield 2001:16) Thus, as state contact intensified in the twentieth century, the Xavante 'selectively adapted' by politicising their culture, identity and traditions and indigenous leaders consciously mixed images of the *Indian* with the national 'myth' of racial democracy and patriotic rhetoric in order to simultaneously demand rights as Brazilian citizens *and* as indigenous people.

Like Garfield (2001) and de la Cadena (2000), Brysk (2000) shows how indigenous people construct and manipulate their 'traditional' identities, and blend these with carefully selected contemporary technologies and ideologies, as they adapt to processes of modernisation and globalisation, constructing identities that are simultaneously local, national and international in the process.[7] Ecuador affords an interesting example to explore these points, both because of the organisational strength of the indigenous movement as well as the movement's ability to (re) articulate political identities, thereby challenging and even transforming both their own cultural politics and that of wider political culture. Compared to the Bolivian case, for instance, Ecuador's

[7] Similarly, Warren (1998) examines pan-Mayan activism in Guatemala and how these activists form a small, mainly urban group of Maya intellectuals, who are reaching out to Guatemala's largely rural population to mobilise national political movements around a revitalised definition of indigenous identity.

indigenous movement has demonstrated both greater political coherence and national influence (see Stonich et al. 2001; Selverston-Scher 2001).

Other research has highlighted the important if ambiguous role of international networks in recent indigenous political mobilisations (DeMars 2004; Keck and Sikkink 1998). Contact with international allies knowledgeable about international human rights law and constitutional reforms in other regions assisted indigenous movements in many Latin America countries in the struggle to alter the institutional environment of indigenous-state relations. Many successfully presented proposals to formally redefine national identity as articulated in the national political constitution. Most Latin American countries in the 1990s indeed adopted constitutional language recognising the ethnic and cultural diversity of the nation--an important symbolic goal. More substantive institutional reforms were also made, such as recognition of the public authority of customary law, protection of collective indigenous land rights, and the right to bilingual education, which provides a structural framework for other indigenous demands--notably the right to self-determination (see Korovkin 2000; Van Cott 2000).

Institutional approaches to indigenous struggle examine in particular the meaning and impact of these new developments (see Assies et al. 2001; Gonzalez Casanova and Roitman Rosenmann 1996; Van Cott 2000).[8] Scholars demonstrate how multicultural reforms resulted not solely from effective mobilisation of indigenous movements but, above all, from confrontations among diverse social and political actors. For example, Assies et al. (2001) examine reforms in Bolivia and Colombia, where significant changes in indigenous (and sometimes black) constitutional rights were attempted in the 1990s as well as other state reforms that aimed to recognise ethnic diversity. Recognising legal pluralism in Colombia satisfied indigenous demands for legal autonomy while reducing the backlog of cases in the national judicial system and extending the rule of public law to rural areas (see also Escobar 2001), and municipal decentralisation in Bolivia facilitated the greater (albeit still limited) participation of indigenous community authorities in public decision-making.

---

[8] In particular, indigenous organisations have lobbied Latin American states to ratify the Labor Organization (ILO) Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal People in Independent Countries (see Chapter 4).

Such multicultural reforms imply a critique of dominant nation- and state-building models and elite notions of democracy and citizenship (Painter and Philo 1995). As Yashar (1999) argues, the failure of Latin American democracies to deliver on the promise of citizenship in the 1980s led to the more politically assertive presentation by indigenous movements of rights claims in the 1990s. To varying degrees, the reforms address both indigenous demands for recognition of difference as well as popular demands for democratic reform.

Some scholars argue that no inherent contradiction exist between indigenous claims to national citizenship and their aspiration to maintain their own separate identity (Leon 1994; Deregori 1998). Van Cott (2000) suggests to the contrary, that the contribution of indigenous struggles to Latin American democratisation lies in infusing the political culture with values of participation, inclusion and tolerance (see also Seracombe and Sellato 2005). Rather than destabilising the state, conceding spheres of autonomy to people that constitute it "is a strategy for strengthening the state itself, by increasing its capacity to dispense justice and property rights" (Van Cott 2000:278). Indeed, Bebbington (2001) argues that rural societies often choose 'modern' production methods as part of their own vision of cultural survival and mediated 'modernisation'. He suggests that a viable indigenous development, which at the same time respects and strengthens ethnic identity, can be based on a modernisation strategy hence building economically viable livelihood strategies. In effect, 'self-determination' is often defined in terms of greater control of local decision-making and more effective participation in national representative structures and economic processes.

Scholars increasingly emphasise the novel, unexpected and even contradictory nature of indigenous mobilisation through local level cultural practices. Consider, for example, the work by Brosius (1997) in Indonesia, who conducted comparative community work in two seemingly similar indigenous communities and found that 1) the type of resistance varied dramatically between the two communities, and 2) that these differences turned on a combination of contingent but nonetheless important events. Brosius thus found that radical differences in reaction to logging companies in the two communities reflected their differing histories with respect to colonialism, social structure, relative autonomy, and links to transnational forces (and environmental NGOs in particular). The point is that some communities do not resist (when outsiders

expect them to) and may not even have any innate interest in externally-cherished local knowledge. Similarly, Zerner (1999) shows how local 'traditions' can be discovered (sometimes at the behest of outsiders) and are then put into service under the new political circumstances in which villagers find themselves. Indeed, this thesis will indicate how some Shuar communities may adopt essentialist 'local traditions' pedalled by foreign activists in order to further local struggles through enhanced natural and global networks (see Chapters 5 and 6).

Thus, instead of viewing indigenous movements as simply defenders of frozen 'traditions', the way that they actively *use* culture and identity alerts us to the contemporary and politicised character of these movements and the ways in which their discourses and claims are forged and shaped through interactions with allies and other actors. Indeed, indigenous mobilisation can be viewed as involving the process of identity (re)formation through interaction between ascription and identification. This opens a window to examine the cultural interactions between strategy and identity and the social and political processes thereby involved.

2.3 Territory and Place

The discussion so far has pinpointed the important relationship between cultural politics, state-building and the spread of capitalism and neoliberal policies with particular reference to Latin America. Implied in this discussion has been the idea of state-based versus indigenous territoriality. Indeed, state-designed development projects have often been associated with a palpable threat to indigenous notions of territory. As such, we will now consider the issue of indigenous territoriality and place-based strategies, as well as associated issues surrounding the notion of a 'local sense of place', as the second element in the elaboration of a theoretical framework for this thesis.

In conceptualising territory, the definition offered by Sack (1986) is the most useful for our purposes. Thus, territoriality is the "attempt by an individual or group to affect, influence, or control people, phenomena and relationships by delimiting and asserting control over a geographic area" (Sacks 1986:19). Territorialization is about excluding or including people within particular geographical boundaries, and about controlling

what people do there--notably, their access to natural resources within those boundaries. Much work in political geography understands territoriality as an attribute of the state (Bryant 2005). The literature examines the impact of interstate relations on territory and how it is understood, the social construction of identity through imagined communities (Anderson 1983), and the possible dissolution of identity and territory through globalisation (Walker 1990; Vandergeest and Peluso 1995). This literature thinks about territory as a geographical unified phenomenon thus reflecting a state-centric view (Taylor 1994; Johnston 2001). Recent work challenges these assumptions leading to what Bryant (2005) terms 'soft territoriality', that is, a situation where territoriality is understood as a strategic and relational practice by a range of state *and* non-state actors operating at complex multi-scale levels (Swyngedouw 1997; Kelly 2002). Thus, territories are constructed and contested "in people everyday lives" and are "spatial reflections of power" (Storey 2001:6). This literature tends to view territory as a multi-actor geographical phenomenon--including, at the local community level (Martin 2003; Storey 2001).

States have certainly played a central role in the territorialization of space. States seek to control a space in which they carry out their actions and throughout which they claim sovereignty and power (Agnew 1999; Brown and Purcell 2003; Doolittle 2005). Yet, the establishment of spatial outreach and the techniques of control that work through the territory are questions about how over time a state responds to the challenges of territorial integration and internal contests for power. Agnew (1994) argues that although the sovereignty of the territorial state has been organised historically at the national scale, the national-scale character of state sovereignty is not inherent. Rather, the state has been socially produced in a particular era by particular political interests. Joseph and Nugent (1994a: 19) examine the ways in which "practical and processual dimensions of state formation" are inherently spatial, based on geographical tools and knowledge and on imaginative geographies and images. Similarly, Radcliffe (2001b: 121) examines the spatial "forms of rule and ruling" that have been accomplished in Ecuador. The Ecuadorian state (as with most states) has divided its territory into economic and political zones, rearranging people and resources within these zones, while creating regulations to control how land and resources can be used. Registered land titles and maps based on scientific surveys are key texts that provide standard and

official definitions of land and property rights for many states (Vandergeest and Peluso 1995).

In fact, mapmaking is an inherently political practice. Sawyer (2004) argues in this vein that maps are 'intellectual weapons' through which states gain power and control, and which they use in turn to legitimise their policies. Even though maps are portrayed as scientific 'truths' they are made within specific political contexts of power (Taylor 1992). Indeed, as Dorling and Fairbairn (1997:7) note, the mapmaker "is able to manipulate the appearance and the content of the map to a surprisingly large degree". When crafted by a government, the maps reflect the dominant social and political order and often deny the historically constructed senses of place and identity felt by local populations. As Scott (1998) points out, state maps simplify and misrepresent complex local practices, depicting only those aspects that interest state officials, such as cash crops, livestock, export-led mineral, oil and lumber production potentials (see Chapter 6). Through classifications and selective representation, maps aid the provision of territorial understandings that often helps to establish and extend state power by the means of physical and discursive control over areas (Smith 1991; Hobsbawn 1990). In this regard, Foucault (1984: 252) notes that specific "spatial agreements are a technique of power and are fundamental in any exercise of power". Territoriality, thus, provides an excellent example of how 'modern governability' has penetrated and shaped human life in unprecedented ways, even though the practices and sites of governance are always fraught with internal complexities and contradictions (Foucault 1991).[9]

For example, Rose (1999:34) argues, "governmental thought territorializes itself in different ways. We can analyse the ways in which the idea of a territorially bounded, politically governed nation-state under sovereign authority took shape".[10] For Rose (1999:32), 'governable spaces' are "modalities in which a real and material governable world is composed, terraformed, and populated". Governable spaces necessitate the territorialization of government thought and practice but are simultaneously produced at differing scales by the laws of political economy. These spaces become

---

[9] Government for Foucault (2000) referred to the 'conduct of conduct', a more or less calculated and rational set of ways of shaping conduct and of securing rule through a multiplicity of authorities and agencies in and outside the state and at a variety of spatial levels. Meanwhile, governability is a form of power exercised through institutions, analysis and reflections which result from complex power relations (Foucault 1991).

[10] Vandergeest and Peluso (1995:385) refer to this as "internal territorialization" in establishing control over natural resources and the people who use them.

'territorialized' and modelled through a system of cognition and remodelled through government practice in a way that frames social thought and governance (Fergusson 2005).[11] I want to root these spaces and forms of power in the logic of oil development which is generative of different sorts of 'politics of scale' (Smith 1992).

However, state territoriality is constantly a highly contested space, with indigenous groups generating different mappings and images of national space (Castree 2004; Moore 1996; Poole 1995; Radcliffe 2001b; Sharp et al. 2000). Another form of territoriality is emerging in Ecuador as mappings of state and citizens are moving out of the state's hands and increasingly into a space informed by indigenous and social movements. Alternative geographies have erupted in Ecuador during the past twenty years that contest the spatial ordering of the state. Relations of citizenship and space have been reworked through processes that illustrate the ways in which "emergent popular cultures and processes of state formation" interact (Joseph and Nugent 1994a: 3). As the negotiation of terms of rule is increasingly subject to indigenous movement input, the rule of the state is thereby transformed. Challenging state-centred notions of a unified and homogenous space, practices of 'popular geographical identities' create new spaces through which to express notions of citizenship, community, and identity (Crovetto 2001; Radcliffe et al. 2002; Radcliffe and Westwood 1996). Popular geographies may attempt to subvert the map of state power by generating a new spatial order and mapping that emphasise novel affiliations to territory.

Thus, it is important to understand how these 'popular geographical identities' may have created new spaces of governance and different sorts of politics. To clarify this matter, this section will now explore the extent to which indigenous territoriality can function as what Foucault (1986) termed 'heterotopias'. These are 'other places' where key local place-based relations are asserted in ways that both represent and challenge broader state-society relations. In doing so, we assess circumstances where indigenous territoriality may be associated with new opportunities for local people to claim rights to land and other resources. To get a better sense of the dynamics involved here, the discussion now focuses on three conceptual aspects that we shall see are central to the construction of indigenous territoriality: 1) place-based relations; 2) sense of place; and

---

[11] The map has been central to this process as it inscribes and marks objects but also as "a little machine for producing conviction in others" (Rose 1999:37).

3) 'placing' culture. While analytically disaggregated, these are all inter-related in practice.

The first conceptual aspect refers to the manner in which local claims to land are partly formed from a group's historical and place-based relations (Murray 2001; Agrawal 2001). These local place relations are also important in constituting a local sense of place (see below). However, "there can be no single definition of place" (Thrift 1999:310) and to define place-based practices is a complex and multi-faceted process. As such, place is assessed here to understand how indigenous territoriality is incorporated as various senses of place. Massey and Jess (1995) point out in this regard that there are often rival claims to the meaning of places and therefore to the right to its legitimate use. Rose (1995) argues that there are four main ways to highlight place-based relations linked to access to resources and land (see also Elmhirst 2001; Massey 1994). First, place is a result of meanings drawn from activities and knowledge derived from direct exposure to local biophysical characteristics. Second, place is a set of social survival relations with the biophysical resources available. Third, place is a manifestation of the uneven socio-cultural relations within a group and/or between groups, again in relation to natural resources. Finally, place is a set of spatial access relations related to the locality--where access also denotes availability of resources rather than just a right of use (see Agnew 1993). In aggregate, the four ways just noted stress the types of relationships associated with place, and hence are of central relevance to the concerns of this thesis.

We also need to recognise how different groups express their various *lived* experiences within a specific geographical location through what is referred to as 'local sense of place'. This is the second conceptual aspect surrounding the concept of indigenous territoriality and refers to the ways in which "human experience and imagination appropriates the physical characteristics and qualities of geographical location" (Oslender 2004:962). It is an outcome of interconnected social and environmental processes that are creating flexible and contingent relations with physical space. Local sense of place "emphasises the significance of a particular place for a group and is linked to a set of place-based relations" (Rose 1995: 88). Sense of place provides the flexibility to explain differences between multiple groups interacting within a defined territory. Thus, a sense of place is not bound by locality per se, as meanings are drawn

from dominant place-based relations or a combination of relations often generated at a distance from them. Indeed, meaning and relations incorporated in a sense of place may even be maintained when people transfer to different localities, like when people move from rural communities to towns.[12]

The relationship of a local community to a geographical location may reflect a *relational* 'sense of place', derived from *living* in biodiversity (Lawrence 2002). This process may highlight specific relations with biodiversity without using that term, for example how hunters may describe how and why they catch fewer animals than in the past (see Chapter 6). A local sense of place may even emphasise power relations when local users forced to render themselves invisible to other actors seek to maintain or 'protect' local claims to land and resources. At first, such experience may seem similar to the discourses articulated by external actors, such as the international science community (see below). Yet, locally articulated protection is nonetheless likely to be different insofar as it reflects highly specific personal or communal identification with, and responsibility felt for, local resources. It then becomes necessary to be able to recognise how different 'local sense of places' may emerge from place-based relations to the biophysical environment (Oslender 2004). Indeed, attention to discursive articulation here underscores the role of nuance and flexibility in this aspect of indigenous territorial expression. Importantly, the prevalence of differences in expressing local senses of place may facilitate a process whereby agreements are negotiated between local groups, even as it allows these groups to adopt a common stance towards outsiders (such as NGOs) but for different reasons. Such negotiation over difference features at various stages of the empirical analysis of the thesis (for example, see Chapter 5).

If sense of place is thus understood as a nexus of social, political and economic relations in constant interaction, then it becomes possible that more than one place can exist in the same location (Massey 1995). This is important in terms of biodiversity where the international science community has identified countries such as Ecuador as places of high biodiversity under threat from human development. This scientific sense

---

[12] From an anthropological perspective, it is argued that the emplacement of all cultural practices stem from the fact that culture is carried into places by bodies-- bodies are 'encultured' thus enacting cultural practices (Ingold 1992). Cultural anthropologists have begun to draw on these theories to show the extent to which local people's engagement with the landscape is endowed with agency.

of place is interpreted as a discourse centred on the idea of 'hot spots' (Friends of the Earth 1994; Mittermeier et al. 2000; see also Chapter 6). Yet, indigenous people living in these areas may contest this sense of place. Their alternative may relate to the physical and spiritual health of the group living in the forest and not see the biodiversity as a degraded hot spot, but rather as a dynamic source of life (Escobar 1998). Mapped hot spots are thus a highly political way of spatially representing and defining human-biodiversity relationships. This is another example of the potential power of maps, and hence of mapmakers to condition social perceptions of place. Here, the mapmaker is the international scientific community, which emphasises those countries where the human threat to residual biodiversity is considered critical and such biodiversity is deemed vital to humanity as a whole. All maps thus "express an embedded social vision" (Harley 1996:441) even as the process of map making can be seen to be "extremely and explicitly subjective" (Dorling and Fairbairn 1997: 39). This holds true whether comparing digitally produced maps (from Geographical Information Systems) assisted through a computer program or those drawn by local people with pen and paper (Bryant 2000; Lawrence 2002; Peluso 1995).

Changing the scale of place brings out the third conceptual element of indigenous territoriality, the 'placing' of culture--or what can be described as a place-based cultural identity. Here, cultural political analysis (discussed in relation to ethnic identity above) may provide the means to understand how local groups discursively place culture and thereby assert their sense of place (for example, see Alvarez et al. 1998). This effort to strategically place culture can be seen to be, in turn, an application of power. As Chapter 6 will consider, the construction of an indigenous sense of place is strategically articulated through political discourse that creatively draws upon and mobilises lived experiences and reconstructs an identity politics in the defence of an indigenous place. This can be seen as a positive process. For Foucault "relations of power are largely positive in the sense that they also give identity/identities to individuals, which enables them to act in the world" (Darier 1999b: 223).

Indeed, where local people strategically place culture, they too seek to place power, because "power is a strategic game" (Foucault 1988b: 18). All of which has important consequences for protected areas, which place claims through boundaries and limit access to resources through zones. In this way, protected areas are designed to be 'other

places' or 'heterotopias', serving as "places of disturbance; their existence unsettles regular categorisations of our living space" (Heyd 1997:61). Thus, protected areas are "counter sites...in which the real sites that can be found within culture are simultaneously represented, contested and inverted" (Quigley 1999:201). It is how protected areas are 'constructed'- the techniques of power and practice that are deployed- that determine their function as heterotopias. Here, too, there may be opportunities for local people to assert claims, such as ancestral domain claims, in a wider political struggle on behalf of indigenous rights.

In Ecuador, indigenous people have increasingly been making territorial demands through the articulation of ancestral domains claims. These claims typically specify locally-defined alternative arrangements that entail the mapping of long-standing local resource practices by indigenous people (Bryant 2000; Howard 1997; Howitt et al. 1996; Peluso 1995). Here, a strong sense of place as historical process is evident, notably in the way that place is connected to ancestry. Indigenous people have thus established communally-held areas based on ancestral heritage where they have long been practising 'traditional' natural resource management. These places are to be considered communally owned and regulated via a set of customary laws and cultural practices (see Chapter 6). As has been noted in this context with reference to indigenous politics and environment in general, "historically, they have managed to protect their ancestral domains thereby protecting also biodiversity" (Bennegan and Lucas-Fernan 1996:156). Thus, where indigenous people are able to help to determine how a protected area functions as an image of biodiversity in which people "locate themselves coherently in the scheme of things", there may be opportunities (Stock 1993: 315). Thus, the analysis of cultural politics may provide a means to understand how local groups discursively negotiate and assert their sense of place in relation to such multi-actor endeavours.

Vandergeest and Peluso (1995) discuss in this regard the issue of 'placing of biodiversity' as part of a wider process of internal state territorialization in Thailand (also the 'enclosure of the commons'). This process consist of three aspects: mapping of land boundaries; the allocation of land rights to private actors; and the designation of specific resource uses by both state and private actors according to territorial criteria (Vandergeest and Peluso 1995). They point out that this process benefits the state as a

means of controlling and facilitating economic interest, hence this state-led process clashes with local property rights particularly where claims comprise overlapping rights. This example provides a means by which to view some of the consequences of 'placing biodiversity". However, not all areas are like those described in Thailand. Indeed, generally it is precisely the process of designating specific resource uses as a consequence of 'placed biodiversity' that may afford opportunities for local people (see Chapter 7). This is important to recognise if we are to understand how asserting a local sense of place may provide opportunities to bring about social change beneficial to indigenous people.

Further, any given discursive outcome may also reflect an altered local sense of place as some local people acquire new social identities emerging from multi-stakeholder negotiations. As Escobar (1999a: 31) states, "hybridisation does not necessarily mean decline through the loss of identity", but rather may allow for identities to be formed ...through the opening of new possibilities". This act of claiming new identities was for Foucault a practice of liberation, a "tactical reversal to that imposed" (Darier 1999b: 229). Therefore, an assertion of a local sense of place may also allow local people to form new identities and enable them to act differently then in the past and in ways designed to better capture new political, economic and cultural opportunities. For example, Wilson (1999) suggests that the cultivation of a common 'place-based identity' or 'sense of place' provides common ground or shared set of environmental, social and cultural values that may allow a 'political community' to be (re)discovered.

Such a 'rediscovered' political community may also be fertile ground for resistance to perceived oppression, a point considered at various stages of this thesis. Escobar (1999a) considers this possibility in the context of Colombian rainforest struggles where a combination of strategies is used to respond to perceived economic depredations. His example of a hybrid discourse between local communities and allied scientists that is targeted against possible 'development' interests highlights how discursive 'hybridisation' can have practical material consequences as an 'alternative' space is created. Similarly, Klooster (2000) examines how local struggles in Mexico over common resources were motivated by historical place-based relations resulting from social injustice and degradation of the environment perpetrated by states and transnational corporations. By directly confronting the imbalances of micro-powers

within the communities "the discursive struggle challenges the distribution of power" (Klooster 2000:15) in a manner not unlike that found by Escobar in Colombia.

This discussion provides insights into the particular dynamics of social relations within a 'field of power' that seeks to explain how asserting place-base relations may result in social change. Thus, small shifts in micro-powers may occur enabling 'larger' relational shifts to occur as hybrid discourses frame 'other places' conducive of new local opportunities, such as the articulation of an indigenous territoriality.

The practical implications surrounding the articulation of an indigenous territoriality, based on the three conceptual elements just noted, are immense. The concept of territory is a central part of the political construction of a 'reality' based on complex local indigenous expressions of place. That reality, as we shall see later in this thesis, is about the development of robust and autonomous local economies and governance structures. Thus, it is now necessary to explore how the assertion of cultural identity and indigenous territoriality and the associated possibility of resisting and mobilising may lead to opportunities for indigenous people to access and control biophysical and material resources, the third element in the theoretical framework of this thesis.

2.4 Access to and Control of Natural Resources

The processes of territorialization have gone hand-in-hand with the historical development of the nation-state. The latter has depended in turn upon the management and exploitation of natural resources, with state agencies set up to regulate access. The state has thus developed both the role of the policeman and the trader. Bryant and Bailey (1997) drawing upon a wide political ecology literature discuss this contradictory role and suggest that state intervention and regulation of the environment has been necessary to allow capital accumulation and a prospering of the modern capitalistic system (see also Bankoff et al. 2004; Bunker 1985; Hall 1998, 2000a; Hecht and Cockburn 1989; Peet and Watts 2004; Neumann 2004; Schmink and Woods 1992). They also argue that the power of the state and its pursuit of economic development noticeably depend on the exploitation of the environment and its ability to facilitate the modern capitalist system (see Redclift 1987). Although the state has formal responsibility for finding solutions to environmental problems, therefore, it is more

likely to allocate resource access rights in a manner that contributes to environmental degradation (Escobar 1996). There are clearly consequences here for questions of access to and control of natural resources. This thesis examines the role of indigenous people in such a political and economic context and considers the socio-economic impacts on these actors of restricted access to and control of land and natural resources.

The subject of the state and environmental management has evoked much pessimism among scholars (see Barry and Eckersley 2005; Greenough and Tsing 2003). Johnston (1996) argues that the state's role as the facilitator of the capitalist system links that actor to contemporary environmental problems that are essentially a by-product of that system. Yet, the state is also the key actor in finding solutions to the problems but is largely prevented from doing so because it is more or less beholden to the interests of capitalists. Walker (1989:32) gloomily adds that "explicit state responsibility for management of the biological and physical resource base, though effectively unavoidable, has never been accepted". Such pessimism stands in sharp contrast to the expectations of state behaviour by some writers that the state is supposed to be dedicated to the promotion of collective goods, of which the environment is a leading example. Using the arguments based on the 'tragedy of the commons' [13] (Hardin 1967) various scholars have argued that there is a need for a powerful state to tackle the world's growing social and environmental problems (for example, Axelrod 1984; Ophuls 1977).

Here, it is useful simply to point out that the flip-side of that justification was a critique of the ways in which grassroots actors managed- or more to the point, were seen *not* to manage- common resources. Yet, the reality of grassroots environmental management has usually been a far cry from the abstract description described by Hardin. Thus, far from being 'free' and open for all, use of the commons has usually been regulated through communal practices (Ecologist 1993). As many scholars point out, what Hardin is actually describing is an 'open-access' situation whereby resources are open to use by all actors, and there are no resource management structures to regulate such use (Blaikie and Brookfield 1987; Ostrom 1990; Ostrom et al. 2002; Peters 1994). Such

[13] Hardin's thesis on the 'tragedy of the commons describes a situation in which individual herders graze their cattle on a common pasture. Each herder seeks to increase the number of cattle on the commons until eventually the limit has been reached. However, rather than reducing the grazing, each herder continues to add cattle to the pasture resulting in the 'tragedy of the commons' as resources are over-exploited and the herders are ultimately impoverished, for a critique see Goldman (1997).

arrangements can be quite complex and may involve multiple and overlapping user rights to land and resources (Blaikie 1989; Schroeder 1999). The management of common property resources has been especially important yet complicated, and has often resulted in the development of highly complex property regimes that bring together different communities with the aim to manage those resources (Ostrom et al. 2002). The development of common property regimes is one way in which, for example, indigenous people have long sought to regulate resource use through specific management practices (Lawrence 2002).

In fact, research by political ecologists has pointed out that Third World environmental problems usually reflect mainly a 'tragedy of enclosure' (Ecologist 1993; Bryant and Bailey 1997; Robbins 2004). In this process, states, often acting in conjunction with business corporations and multinational institutions, deny local access to commons hitherto managed by local communities. In effect, the control of common resources is taken over by the state for large-scale commercial exploitation or by allied corporate interests using the legal powers of the state. A notable case in point has been the creation of reserved forests, national parks and 'government lands' in many parts of the Third World (Anderson 2004; Bryant 1994b; Colchester and Lohmann 1993; Fearnside 2003; Fox 1998; Neumann 1992, 2004; Painter and Durham 1995; Peluso 1992, Utting 1993). The habitually exploitative practices--styled 'development' in the postcolonial era (Escobar 1995)--carried out in these 'nationalised' territories have included large-scale logging, mining, cattle ranching, cash-crop production and dam construction (Watts 1994). The ways in which traditionally powerful actors have benefited from these activities is a reoccurring theme in political ecology and is of central interest as well to the concerns of this thesis.

Indeed, the social, political and economic marginalisation of indigenous people has explicitly been linked to how states turn locally-owned and operated common resources into state-run territories (Goldman 1998; Hong 1987; Howitt 2001; Jomo et al. 2004; Neumann 1998; Peluso and Harwell 2001; Peters 1994; Schroeder and Suryanata 2004; Tuck-Po 2004). Rather than being an actor with possible solutions to environmental problems, therefore, the state has typically exacerbated those problems. In effect, there seems to be a continuing potential conflict between the state's role as a developer and

as a protector and steward of the biophysical environment (Walker 1989). However, the privileged position of the state as a protector and steward of the environment has now changed as a result of the growing power of other actors, notably transnational corporations and multilateral institutions, linked to the forces of neoliberal policies and globalisation (as initially mentioned in Chapter 1). As such, multiple political-economic processes that influence access to resources, such as markets, government institutions, and regulatory policies, often today play crucial roles in the ways resources are used and managed (Moore 1986; Simmons 2002; Steinberg 2001; Vandergeest 1996). To take but one example, this thesis investigates how oil-based development has resulted in local people being denied access to 'traditional' lands and natural resources as companies acquire the right to exploit oil in state-sanctioned blocks (see Chapter 7). Still, all is rarely lost for indigenous people. As Peluso (2003: 216), argues, for example, "broader global trends and market or government incentives for privatisation and individualisation of resource access have not unilaterally transformed the common aspect of community and descent-group claims on property rights".

As was the case elsewhere at the close of the twentieth century, neoliberal economic reform in Latin America has represented the dominant arrangement of practices that constitute what Michael Foucault (1991) called 'governability' or the 'conduct of conduct'. Indeed, throughout the 1990s neoliberal policies became primary measures through which to shape the behaviour and condition the movement of populations, capital, and resources (Neumann 2005; Sawyer 2004). Policies and programmes seeking to privatise the public sector, to liberalise trade, to deregulate the economy, and to decentralise administrative functions also seek gradually to release the state from its formal role of championing social development and the betterment of its people. Through trickle-down economics, it is thought that the market forces of a robust economy and the greater circulation of transnational capital will resolve social problems and inequalities, and will thereby establish the conditions necessary for democracy to flourish (Sawyer 2004; Stiglitz 2002).

In general, neoliberal policies implemented across the globe have progressively sought to relieve the state of many of its responsibilities to govern its subjects. This is a process which scholars have referred to as the 'degovernmentalisation' of the state, or 'decentralisation' of government (Foucault 1991; Rose 1996; Escobar 1995). For some.

it has produced a set of conditions that has compromised and undermined the very tenets of the modern nation state. As I explore in this thesis, while neoliberal rule aims to transform the state and sites of governance notably by facilitating transnational capital accumulation, neoliberal policies do not seek to eliminate government per se.[14] Rather, what the Ecuadorian case (among others) seems to demonstrate, is how processes that govern subjects are transforming, displacing and replacing sites of government. Neoliberal rule has created new governance arrangements in which transnational corporations have played an important part in shaping the environment, notably through their involvement in oil development (see Chapter 7; see also Skjaerseth and Skodvin 2003).

Here, it is necessary to clarify what Foucault means by 'government' and therefore how the biophysical environment enters into the constitution of regulatory practices and political strategies, and indeed into the creation of particular sorts of governable spaces. According to Foucault (1982: 221) government is the "exercise of power in guiding the possibility of conduct and putting in order the possible outcome", and it "designates the way in which the conduct of individuals and groups might be directed". This definition is useful because it allows for a multiplicity of institutional forms and relations even beyond the state. Further, "to govern is to structure the possible field of action of others" where freedom is implicit in this exercise of power because individuals and groups face possibilities and have a choice of relations to them (Foucault 1982: 221). In this sense, environmental initiatives are government insofar as power is exercised to 'guide' local people and groups to 'proper' use of the environment. Hence, 'proper' use opens up a field of opportunities for various actors including indigenous people.

In a broader sense, words like 'guiding' and 'proper' use raise the issue of 'governability'. Governability is a form of power exercised through an "ensemble of institutions, procedures, analysis and reflections which results in forming specific apparatus and a whole complex of power" (Foucault 1991:102). There exist a multiplicity of power relations; hence there are many governabilities (Foucault 1991). In recognising different sorts of governabilities, it is possible to consider how we think about governing--both through collective and individual action (Dean 1999). As Foucault states, "governability is more concerned with how thought operates within our

[14] Government here understood in the Foucualdian sense of the term, see below.

organised ways of doing things, our regime of practices and with its ambitions and effects" (cited in Dean 1999:18). However, as Ferguson (1994) and Bryant (2002) observe in different environment and development contexts, the unintended effects of these practices may be equally important. Here, and in keeping with the themes of this thesis, potential opportunities may be based in how local people are governed through regimes of practices associated with land and resources, "the conditions under which regimes of practices emerge, continue to operate and are transformed" (Dean 1999:23). In this way, it is possible to explore how the environment enters into the constitution of regulatory practices and political strategies, and into the creation of particular sorts of governable spaces (Braun 2003).

Two issues emerge from this discussion on environment and governance in relation to the concerns of this thesis and its Ecuadorian case study. First, transnational corporations (TNCs) have played an increasingly important role in shaping the environment through new governable spaces (Levy and Newell 2004). Indeed, through neoliberal policies that role has become even more central (Peet and Watts 2004). However, transnational corporations have generally tended to have an adverse environmental effect, especially in the natural resource sector, because these actors privilege profit maximisation over social justice and environmental conservation in their day-to-day operations. Given current neoliberalism, an important question is therefore whether businesses can be persuaded that 'sustainable development' is worth pursuing in its own right, on the basis that it might afford them glittering new opportunities for capital accumulation (Bryant and Bailey 1997). The evidence here is so far ambiguous to say the least. A growing number of local and transnational businesses are pointing out their involvement in 'green' business activities by using 'environmentally-friendly' technologies and operations as evidence that they are leading the way in the quest for sustainable development and ecological modernisation (Clapp and Dauvergne 2005; Lyon and Maxwell 2004; Sawyer 2003). At first glance, such activities would appear to be ideal for the principle of profit maximization on the one hand, and environmental conservation and social justice on the other. However, when specific cases are examined, a less rosy picture emerges.

Sawyer (2003), for example, shows how one oil company, ARCO Oriente, claimed that it had adopted 'environmentally-friendly' technologies and operations in central

Ecuador. However, the firm's focus on the environment went hand in hand "with its continual attempt to contain the presence of indigenous people and erase the role of the military in securing its oil operations" (Sawyer 2003:72). From the time the company began exploring for oil in the region in 1988, it emphasised its focus on the environment while simultaneously concealing its part in setting local communities against each other, weakening indigenous political capacity, and using state and private security forces to stifle protest--a set of issues that loom large in this thesis in the context of detailed empirical work taken from a different region of Ecuador.

In the case of TNC-allied multilateral institutions, Goldman (2004) examines the 'greening' of development institutions, such as the World Bank. He argues that the World Bank has had an important role in shaping the environment notably through its involvement in promoting 'green' business activities that address global environmental problems (see also Horta 2000). The World Bank has strengthened itself through re-invention as a catalyst for 'green' institutional change, and it has enlisted scores of social actors and institutions to generate a new development regime that is 'green' as well as neoliberal. In short, the institution has been at the centre of constituting a hegemonic yet fragile project of 'green neoliberalism' that is of recurrent interest in this study.

The second issue to arise from the preceding discussion of environment and governance is related to the prospect that other actors may be able to force reluctant local and transnational businesses and institutions to pursue environmentally-friendly practices through diverse political strategies. As discussed at greater length in this thesis, the 'empowerment' of a broadly understood civil society vis-à-vis the state has increased the power not only of corporations but also of indigenous organisations and NGOs. In a sense, the growing assertiveness and power of the latter two actors is directly related to the widespread sentiment that neither the state nor business is capable of promoting sustainable development since both actors have benefited so handsomely from environmentally destructive practices in the past (Bryant 2005).

Here, we draw once more on Foucault to understand these processes as well as to appreciate how shifts in environmental governance may uncover new possible local opportunities. Foucault's analysis of the fluid nature of power relations removes the

myth that power sits permanently within structures, persons, roles and institutions. Foucault's (1982:220) definition of 'conduct of conduct' thus broadens our frame of analysis so that opportunities in governance may occur in both formal *and* informal practices affecting *both* organisations *and* individuals. Further, the opportunity "to govern is to structure the possible fields of actions to act on our own or other's capacities for action" (Dean 1999:14). Yet, this presupposes the existence of freedom and the capacity to think and act for *both* governed *and* governor (see Cruikshank 1999; Rose 1999). Freedom is therefore the capacity to struggle in these fields of power relations (Foucault 1982). Analysing changes and struggles in these power relations is therefore the challenge. To assist this task, Foucault suggests that the discursive practices be analysed since they indicate shifts in micro-power relations, which in turn may result in broader social and political transformation.

Of general interest in this thesis, therefore, is how the possibility of participating in environmental governance may lead to shifts in the nature of resource use and control of benefit to indigenous people. Gordon (1991:5) states that, power in a society is "never fixed and closed regime, but rather an endless and open strategic game". This interpretation can be positive in the light of the concerns in this thesis. As noted, indigenous communities are made up of complex systems of practices, procedures and processes involving many institutions, groups and individuals, with complex micro-powers operating between them. As strategic struggles over micro-power occur, there is always the possibility that a shift seen to be beneficial to many if not all local communities can be obtained.

Here, the implications of struggles for resource access and control require some discussion in the light of our interest in the politics of indigenous action. The first thing to note is that restricted or denied access to natural resources and land usually serves to further marginalise indigenous people (Gadgil and Guha 1992, 1995; Richards 1997; Ribot 1998). Doolittle (2005) argues that changes in property rights rarely follow an evolutionary trajectory from open access to common property to private and state property. Instead different actors are motivated to alter property regimes and increase their opportunities through their struggles for wealth, power, and identity. The resulting changes in property regimes can be unexpected and can have unanticipated impacts on natural resources. Indeed, not only is access to common resources ended, but

indigenous people have often been forced into a situation in which they must join the degradation of the local environment on the principle of 'if you cannot beat them, join them' (Blaikie and Brookfield 1987; Bryant and Bailey 1997). Many indigenous people have often adopted strategies that aim to minimise adverse effects on them while at the same time avoiding direct confrontation with powerful actors.

One such adaptive response is to utilise diverse social and economic 'coping' strategies which may originate with 'traditional' responses to environmental change, but which are also deployed in the context of enclosure or environmental degradation. Such strategies notably encompass the modification of 'traditional' agricultural practices, the sale of livestock or the request of economic and technological assistance from external actors, such as state agencies, transnational corporations, or non-governmental organisations (NGOs) (Bebbington 2004). As Chapter 6 relates, the Shuar have been 'forced' to take up economic activities, such as cattle ranching, which involve the destruction of local forests in a manner similar to rival *mestizos*, in an attempt to secure their land. If they would not clear forests in this way, the Shuar might lose their land to colonists able to claim 'undeveloped' forest as their own under the Ecuadorian law (see also Bebbington et al. 1993). Yet, the ability to fight marginalisation through coping strategies alone should not be exaggerated because the economic strategies resorted to may lead to the depletion of essential local resources, and ultimately, the intensified impoverishment of the indigenous people in question (Blaikie 1985).

The second thing to note is that restricted or denied access to natural resources and land is typically related to the dissolution of those resource management arrangements that had hitherto managed the commons. As power over local resources shifted from local people to states and other actors external to the community (such as national or transnational corporations), the need for these grassroots institutions largely disappeared and with it the utility of local cooperation in environmental management (Ghai and Vivian 1992; St. Martin 2001). Yet, not all of these institutions have disappeared, as the Ecuadorian case analysed in this thesis shows. Indeed, local people have often resorted to fierce conflict over access in the face of outsider management of local resources usually conducted by covert or overt means. In marked contrast to diverse forms of adaptation, many indigenous people have thus sought to fight the oppression of the more powerful actors in order to secure access to natural resources

through what Scott (1985) calls 'everyday forms of resistance' and/or by creating indigenous organisations, as being highlighted in Chapter 1. Here, it is important to note that the growing emphasis on indigenous organisations seems to clearly indicate that everyday resistance and adaptation strategies have clear limits in the quest to secure access to commons resources (Bayliss-Smith 2003; Hviding and Bayliss-Smith, 2000; Howitt 2001; Gauld 2000).

Indigenous movements are increasingly seen to be the most effective way in which to secure indigenous access to resources and land (Sawyer 2004). Yet, there are other factors that encourage a more cautious assessment of their ability to transform politicised environments. First, there is the problem of the limited scale and impact of many of the projects developed by indigenous organisations. This 'Achilles heel of localisation' (Esteva and Prakash 1992) may constrain the effectiveness of initiatives in that those initiatives do not assist and/or represent the people that need them most. This situation in turn may limit the ability of these organisations to change local political, social and ecological conditions. Non-governmental organisations may be critical here in helping indigenous organisations to overcome such difficulties but there are often constraints on the ability of NGOs to assist local people (Perreault 2003b). As Vivian (1994) observes, there are no 'magic bullets' where the abilities of NGOs are concerned. For instance, Slater (2003) observes that the struggle to preserve the rainforest involves a series of dramas in which local, regional, and transnational elements regularly collide and intertwine (see also Brown and Purcell 2003). While local people may be interested above all in securing access to needed resources and land, national and international NGOs may paint them as innate preservationists, thereby setting up a clear tension between these 'allies' (Bryant 2005; Brosius et al. 1998).[15]

Second, even with the assistance of NGOs, there are no guarantees that indigenous organisations will be able to overcome the serious political and economic obstacles that traditionally powerful actors may throw in their way (Hall 2000). At a local scale, political leaders often seek to subvert the autonomy of indigenous organisations that they usually regard as a threat to their political and economic position. For example,

[15] For an example of how the related idea of the Noble Savage has served several groups, including foreign anthropologists, see Redford (1990) and Ellington (2001).

both Vitug (1993) and Lawrence (2002) note that in the Philippines there are thousands of grassroots organisations, but many of them have found it difficult to dislodge local bosses involved in economic activities which degrade the environment. The growing activity of indigenous organisations thus does not in and of itself signal a shift in power relations between indigenous people and more powerful actors in many Third World countries.

Third, indigenous organisations are not always unified in their aims and interests. Here, internal divisions may weaken the political effectiveness of these organisations. In so far as indigenous organisations base their operations on democratic principles, they must confront the heterogeneity of local people's interests (Agrawal and Gibson 1999; Fairhead and Leach 1995; Hodgson and Schroeder 2002; Lawrence 2002; Rangan 2000, 2004; Rocheleau et al. 1996). In the well-known case of the Chipko movement, for example, Agarwal (1992) argues that conflict within that organisation developed in one village when the men sought to fell a community oak forest in order to establish a potato-seed farm from which they would primarily benefit, while the women were opposed to this move on the grounds that they would thereby lose their main local source of fuelwood and fodder.

Further, as indigenous organisations develop resource management projects to secure access to resources and land they must confront the possibility that some members may seek to benefit from these projects without assisting those most in need (O'Faircheallaigh 1998). Thus, as projects unfold, the prospect of internal dissent is an ever-present threat--especially in the context in which powerful opponents of these organisations may seek to subvert their activities. The complex processes arising from this distinction are discussed further in Chapters 5 to 7. Here, it is important to understand generally that these internal differences may become manifest in struggles within and between indigenous communities. These struggles in turn encompass how people relate to the environment and access local land and other resources (Robbins 2004; Seracombe and Sellato 2005).

Finally, the dependency of most indigenous organisations on the political and financial support of NGOs, states or multilateral institutions suggests that the activities of the former are extremely vulnerable to disruption in the light of the shifting interests of the

latter (Bebbington 2004; Bryant and Bailey 1997; Gibson et al. 2000; Igoe 2003). That money plays a pivotal role in the operations of both social movements and non-governmental organisations is a recurring theme in the literature. Generally, funding is widely seen as the 'Achilles heel' of the work of these actors as the need for money can lead them into trade-offs at odds with their original aims (Bryant 2005; Fowler 2000). Money is seen as rendering actions ambiguous and core aims and goals may be compromised (Smillie 1995; Hulme and Edwards 1997). Weisbrod (1998: 12) thus observes that the central dilemma facing NGOs, for example, is "how to balance pursuit of their social missions with financial constraints when additional resources may be available from sources that might distort mission". For others, the problem is dependency (Fowler 2000). McCarthy and Zald (1987: 385) highlight the insidious impact of dependency of social movements on state, transnational or church funding and such dependency has the effect of "directing organised dissent into legitimate channels", thereby "diffusing the radical possibilities of dissent in general". Thus, this literature shows how the need for money can distort missions-- with the result that the promotion of the political autonomy of actors and causes may be threatened.

Indeed, this thesis will examine how the selective success of the Shuar federations in Ecuador has been linked to the provision of political, financial and technical support from diverse benefactors, such as national and international NGOs. Yet, reliance on outside support has meant that sometimes the decisions made regarding the design and implementation of projects may come from outside support agencies rather than from a Shuar organisation itself. In these cases, what may have been intended originally to be a process of grassroots organising turns out in practice to be merely participation by grassroots actors in a programme that is planned by outsiders--raising troubling questions about the long-term viability of 'alternative' resource initiatives (see Chapter 7). Thus, it is important to highlight the ambiguous nature and possible contradictions of indigenous organisations in order to fully understand how and to what extent they may be able to challenge the policies and politics of powerful actors.

2.5 Summary

The aim of this chapter has been to set out the theoretical framework of the thesis through reference to key conceptual themes and issues. In doing so, that framework has seen to combine the concerns of political ecology and new social movement analysis in order to investigate the ways in which notions of cultural identity, territory and place, and control over resource access have become central to indigenous politics and struggles.

The first research theme guiding this thesis is therefore that of cultural identity politics. The chapter highlighted how the elaboration of indigenous identity reflects a complex and hybrid genealogy of identification that has emerged over decades. That identity has been made around a strong inter-connected sense of territory, culture and tradition, but in the context of cultural, economic and political change. This elaboration was achieved through complex negotiations over culture and identity, even as the rise of indigenous politics nationally and internationally unleashed considerable political energy among indigenous people resentful of their marginalised status. It also became the tool used to build the political strategies of indigenous people who sought to articulate collective political, economic, and cultural views critical of neoliberal policies and state-designed development projects as well as associated understandings of nation and democracy.

The second research theme guiding this thesis then demonstrates how indigenous territoriality has been articulated in contradistinction to state territoriality. This discussion emphasised how the idea of state-designed development projects has often been associated with a threat to indigenous notions of territory. However, state territoriality is a highly contested space where indigenous movements have increasingly resisted the spatial ordering favoured by the state. The practical considerations surrounding the articulation of an indigenous territoriality were based on three conceptual elements--namely place-based relations, local sense of place and place-based cultural identity. These elements, it was suggested, may in turn create new opportunities for local indigenous people to claim rights to land and resources.

The third element in the theoretical framework of this thesis concerned the question of resource access. The chapter here examined the role of indigenous people in a

politicized environment and considered the socio-economic impact on these actors of restricted access to natural resources and land. Neoliberal policies have become primary measures through which to control this vital ingredient of indigenous life. Here, Foucault was used in order to understand these processes as well as to appreciate how shifts in environmental governance may uncover new local opportunities. Of general interest to this thesis, therefore, is how the possibility of participating in environmental governance may lead to shifts in the nature of resource use and control in relation to indigenous people.

If this set of concerns constitutes the theoretical framework of the thesis, it next remains to explain the methodology used in this study--the task of chapter 3. Chapter 4 then provides the essential background of an Ecuadorian context involving state-designed development projects and land reforms, neoliberalism and oil-dependency, and associated indigenous mobilisations. It thus presents an overview of indigenous struggles and oil politics in Ecuador that sets the scene for the empirical analysis of Chapters 5, 6, and 7.

The theoretical framework set out in this chapter is thereafter assessed in the empirical analysis of chapters 5 to 7. In Chapter 5, the aim is to examine the way in which the Shuar struggle has been partly about the articulation of Shuar cultural identity and its deployment in political battles with both the Ecuadorian state and transnational oil companies. In contrast, Chapter 6 considers how that struggle has itself come to be defined in terms of particular geographical notions of Shuar territoriality and a local sense of place. Here, the effort by the Shuar movement to advance indigenous interests through the interweaving of ancestral and ecological claims is explored. In turn, Chapter 7 examines struggles over both material and natural resources and how the Shuar have elaborated various resource management projects in order to safeguard these resources. Finally, Chapter 8 relates these findings back to the theoretical framework to assess the broader validity and importance of the study, and to suggest further research opportunities and issues pertaining to indigenous struggles.

Chapter 3 Methodology

3.1 Why Ecuador and the Shuar people?

The aim of this chapter is to explain why Ecuador and the Shuar people were chosen as a case study while also outlining a variety of practical, ethical and political implications of undertaking research in the Amazonian region. Further, the general methodological approach and precise methods that I used to undertake the field research will be discussed with a focus on the ethnographic approach and participatory methods.

In order to examine the complex and multi-faceted ways in which an indigenous political movement is constructed and operates, this thesis focuses on a case study of the Shuar people in the south-eastern part of the Amazonian region in Ecuador. Choice of the site was driven by my research interest to encompass an area and an indigenous group with distinct means and experience of indigenous mobilisation and political organising. For ten months between 2003 and 2004, I collaborated with Shuar residents on a daily basis in the quotidian practices of indigenous organising (or indeed the lack of it). This collaboration shaped my research so that it spanned multiple spaces (local, regional, national and transnational) and encountered multiple perspectives (indigenous, *campesino*, state, corporate, elite). In the Shuar federations, *FederaciónInterprovincial de Centros Shuar* (FICSH) and the *Federación Indenpendiente del Pueblo Shuar del Ecuador* (FIPSE), headquartered in Macas and Sucua, in rainforest communities or in regional assembly meetings, I sat on hard wooden benches with federation leaders and community members drinking *chicha* (a traditional fermented drink made out of *juka*) and eating *plátano* (plantains) and *juka*, debating the realities that affected Shuar lives. I trekked for days into the rainforest to stay with far-flung Shuar communities, I slept on banana leaves on mud floors, preparing food from the open fire, I worked with villagers in the *chakras* (agricultural plots) and I followed them when they went fishing and hunting. I accompanied the Shuar on their marches, ministry occupations, protests and mobilisations, and I followed them into meetings with oil company executives and state officials.

Even after being in Morona Santiago for more than one month in 2003 I was still rather apprehensive about the practical feasibility of my research. The constituency of the

Shuar federations convened in the Morona Santiago province, and I had heard stories of federations opposition to the projects of volunteers and scholars wanting to work in the region. As elsewhere in Ecuador, working with indigenous organisations can be tricky and difficult--a politically sensitive endeavour, given the history of discrimination, marginalisation and exploitation that have been the reality in the region for a long time. Being a researcher, however, made a person multiply suspect, especially as all researchers were believed to be anthropologists. Indeed, that discipline was long defamed for having played handmaiden to many 'civilising' missions in the region (Sawyer 1997). However, my prospects of working with an indigenous organisation trying to confront oil development were further placed in doubt as many other foreign people before me had expressed similar interests but nothing had come to fruition.

However, I had done research previously in the *Oriente* (the Amazonian region) during the summer of 2002 for my MA dissertation. I knew that attitudes towards researchers and northern collaborators were changing within Ecuador's federation system--although how and in what ways remained unclear. Those leaders I had come to know in 2002 no longer held office in 2003 as their three-year terms had ended. Most of FIPSE's and FICSH's leadership was unknown to me and me to them, other than through my previous ties with a few Shuar leaders. As I look back, my links within a growing network of indigenous rights and environmental organisations, and the openings such networks facilitated, eased nevertheless my ability to work with the Shuar federations and allowed me to visit some Shuar communities. The occasion also marked what was to be the form and content of my PhD field work: the intensive day in and day out collaboration with two of the most progressive Amazonian federations at the time as they struggled with US-based oil companies, Ecuadorian development projects and a highly dependent neoliberal state.

The account that this thesis tells primarily emerged from collaboration with FIPSE and FICSH and with some Shuar communities in what was inevitably a political and social exercise. As such, my research inevitably dispensed with any pretensions of 'objectivity'. Yet, my engaged research afforded methodological richness that could not have been acquired in any other way. Establishing my political allegiances was critical to being able to collaborate with the Shuar federations and to stay in the communities; the Shuar would never have permitted my visit otherwise. The connections that came

from working daily with the Shuar also allowed me to build deep trusting friendships with federation leaders and community residents. However, I became acutely aware as the research progressed of the lack of trust that existed between the federations themselves and many community members--a situation that complicated in particular my efforts to build trust with community members. These local connections rather derived fortuitously from my previous field research undertaken in 2002 that had allowed me to work in selected communities. This engaged research allowed me to grasp the complex and multi-faceted situation faced by the Shuar--a situation that led some Shuar to challenge authority while others capitulated to the powerful even as they captured new economic opportunities. In short, my politically-engaged form of participant observation helped me to understand the circumstances that politicised the Shuar struggles as well as the differentiated responses that emerged from the Shuar people.

Inevitably, I encountered a variety of practical problems in the field, including having to get used to the tropical weather, flood-prone rivers, omnipresent insects and animals (some quite dangerous), and transport difficulties (especially after heavy rainfall). As a result, I became very ill at the end of my fieldwork after having caught a number of tropical infections and viruses. However, since I was a young female on my own meant that the villagers wanted to look after me. Nobody seem threatened by me, which they possibly might have done if I had been an older, male researcher, since people often fear that such a person is a government or oil company employee trying to infiltrate their communities.

However, my constant questioning would sometimes frustrate a few of the research participants, and hence I felt a need to give something back as a token of appreciation for their time and patience. For example, on my trips to the towns I brought back requested items such as a bag of salt or rice, or pens and notepads for the children. Caution had to be taken never to promise to do something that I would not be able to fulfil, since local people are disillusioned with outsiders whose promises to improve their lives never materialise. From the beginning I emphasised that the project and my research were to be studies with no direct material benefits, although copies of the project findings, reports, maps and photographs would be left with community leaders.

Field relations were strengthened over time, and as I learned more about the lives of the people in the communities, they learned more about me. This shared knowledge enhanced a mutual, if unequal relationship. In some respects, it proved to be ethically uncomfortable for me because, as I gained their trust, they would open up to me more, enabling me to acquire richer data about their lives. Sometimes, I felt like I was manipulating friendship in order to get good data (see Punch 1986). Such close contact could also prove problematic as I found it increasingly hard to switch from a very informal conversation to a more formal semi-structured interview situation to talk about particular issues.

My desire to collaborate with the Shuar federations and to work with the communities emerged from both my connections to environmental and indigenous rights NGOs based in Europe and Latin America and the education (both formal and informal) I have had the privilege to obtain as a European. From having worked with environmental and indigenous rights' campaigns in Latin America and having visited other 'Third World' countries by the time I started the thesis, this experience had imbued me over the years with a keen knowledge of and distaste for global inequalities. Similarly, undergraduate and graduate studies in English universities deepened my understanding of social injustices, which in turn disciplined me to write about and think through the social and political reality that people in the 'Third World' face under capitalism and neoliberal policies. These analytical insights complemented indigenous movements' practical aims in the field designed to rethink, oppose and capitalise upon broader political and economic processes and networks (of which I formed part).

The research used an ethnographic approach and participatory research methods to understand the complex and multi-faceted nature of indigenous political movements and to examine the case study of the Shuar people's struggles against oil development and neoliberal policies in the south-eastern Amazonian region in Ecuador. Other methodologies could have been employed, such as survey, historical or archival analysis. However, the research is looking at contemporary events surrounding indigenous political movements and oil development in a real time situation with groups whose behaviour cannot be controlled (Hamel et al. 1993; Yin 1994). Furthermore, as the investigation is explanatory and descriptive in content and multiple variables are involved, a survey would tend to miss the complex and multi-faceted

discourses and storylines within and between the different actors involved in the struggles (Bennett 2000). Discussion topics changing over time, or shifting opinions of groups in response to context, are normally seen to be a problem in some types of research. Yet, shifting discourses and storylines in regard to indigenous political movements and struggles against oil development are precisely the interest of this study.

This section has briefly explained why Ecuador and the Shuar people were chosen as a case study in my PhD research and it has described a variety of practical, ethical and political implications of my undertaking that research. Let us now turn to a discussion of the central methodological approach that I used to undertake the field research, namely the ethnographic approach.

3.2 Methodological Approach

Ethnographic research has long been a distinguished part of academic work (Denzin and Lincoln 1998). This is particularly the case within anthropology where fieldworkers have long gone to 'foreign places' to chart the customs and habits of 'other' societies. However, in recent times ethnography has 'come home' (Jackson 1987) and Western social scientists are increasingly utilising these methods to study complex issues in their own societies as well. Both contextual considerations and epistemological reflections have stimulated this renewed interest in ethnographic research. The increasing complexity of social contexts, especially the dissolution of 'old' social inequalities into the new diversity of subcultures, social movements, and ways of doing politics has required new sensitivity within empirical study (Flick 1998). Thus, contemporary theoretical concerns with social movements have promoted a change in methodological fashion from quantitative research methods to more in-dept qualitative techniques (see Atkinson et al. 2001; Burgess 1996; Burgess et al. 1988; Cook and Crang 1995; Phillips 2000; Pile 1991).

Rather than simply a set of research techniques that centres on a very particular epistemological standpoint concerning the objectivity of knowledge, the ethnographic approach recognises the researcher's subjectivity as an explicit part of the research. Indeed, ideas of 'value-free' research are rejected in favour of a recognition that the

researcher's positionality, reflections, ideas, thoughts and feelings form an integral part of the interpretation process (Hughes et al. 1999). The researcher is not a detached neutral observer (or participant) but rather equally positioned in and interconnected with the research context as the researched (Cook and Crang 1995). Thus, the ethnographic approach accepts that the researchers may influence the research context since they become a part of the social world they study (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995). Barnes and Duncan (1992:3) argue that "the worlds we represent are inevitably stamped with our own particular set of local interests, views, stands, and so on. To understand our own representations, and also those of others, we must therefore know the kinds of factors bearing upon an author that makes an account come out the way it does". Therefore, it must also be recognised that what we choose to observe, what we consider to be data, what we write about and how we do it, will always be affected by our personal and institutional values and underlying assumptions absorbed through our training. Focusing on the day-to-day processes by which an understanding of situations are carved out, this reflexivity links ethical concerns about presenting 'truth' with concerns for the relationships between the fieldworker and the people studied (Devereux and Hoddinott 1992).

Another feature of ethnographic research is that it grounds research in the 'life-worlds' and the experiences of the research participants to understand how societies or groups work 'from the inside' (Escobar 1997). Such an approach takes into account the fact that the participants' knowledge and viewpoints are negotiated through and shaped by different cultural, social, political and economic practices, which are embedded in the research field (Francis 1992). As Flick (1998: 6) puts it: "Inter-relations are described in the concrete context of the case and explained in relation to it". By using the ethnographic approach the research participants are choosing the research methods, not the other way around (Clifford and Marcus 1986). The researcher uses the tools of his or her methodological choice and adopts whatever methods are appropriate. In this way, the choice of research practices depends on the questions that are asked, and the questions depend on their context (Nelson et al. 1992).

Ethnography was the most appropriate research strategy for my study for several reasons. First, a key process to be examined from an ethnographic perspective is the growing participation in and influence of indigenous politics and organising. It is

through this set of practices and strategies that the dominant political and economic discursive formation is contested. Escobar (1998) has argued that more ethnographic research is needed on how these organisations articulate their visions and issues in terms of specific links to culture, politics and nature. These organisational networks are prime examples of the emergent set of transnational practices and identities that link place-based modes of activism to broader political and economic processes. Thus, by using an ethnographic approach, the focus has been upon documenting one empirical example of how indigenous movements are facing these questions from the perspective of culture and politics.

Second, ethnography is a practical approach to employ when, as in the case of this thesis, the research setting is in a remote place as opposed to an easily accessible rural area where daily visits to carry out interviews or observation would be possible (Madge 1994). The relative geographical isolation of many Shuar communities from wider national and transnational centres also meant that the research participants had limited in-depth contact with outsiders. They tended therefore to be timid and unaccustomed to social interaction with people from outside their community. Indeed, many of the people had never seen a white person before my arrival in their community. Consequently, at the start of the research, they reacted with stares and nervous giggles. Initially, conversations involved single-word answers until they became accustomed to my presence after I had stayed for some time. Living in the communities and taking part in some of the residents daily activities meant that I could form a relationship of trust vital for gathering data which were sensitive to their own perceptions of their lives.

Finally, understanding ethnography as an approach allowed me to encompass a range of participatory research methods, including participant observation, in-dept interviews, oral histories, discussion groups, and community mapping techniques. As noted, methodological strategies applied in the field were still very much based on observing what was going on in the field by collaborating with the Shuar federations and participating in the everyday life of Shuar communities. This type of approach may be interpreted as showing (in a positive way) flexibility towards the subject under study but also holds the danger of methodological arbitrariness. However, such an understanding does not preclude work based on the interpretation of narratives, story-

lines, and images, which are integrated into this kind of participatory research design where they hold out the promise of further knowledge or the affirmation of field insights.

A particularly important element in an ethnographic approach is the validation of the researcher's findings by local people themselves. Questions of validity arise in several forms that relate to theory, practice and analysis. To ensure theoretical validity the study was related to a real-world situation and the methods that were chosen were appropriate for the theories discussed (Kitchen and Tate 1999). To ensure methodological validity, correct operational procedures needed to be established that were valid for the practices being studied. By asking different groups to validate the results, the effect of informant bias could be minimised. Validation was carried out either through community meetings, involving as broad a cross-section of the community as possible, or in small group discussions. The validation process provides the researcher with an opportunity to compare her/his interpretation of the information that has been collected with local people's understanding (Punch 2002). This can be valuable both as a means of validating the information itself and as a way of understanding how local people's viewpoints and interpretation might differ from that of 'outsiders' such as the researcher.

Perhaps most importantly, the validation process plays an important role in ensuring that local people acquire a sense of ownership of the investigation and its findings, and that the researcher continues to learn about the community even as she or he provides feedback on changes and the impacts of project activities. In turn, this may led to changes to research aims and /or valuable information is added in the course of the research. Thus, validity is enhanced by research techniques that build trust and openness and which give the informants scope to express the way they see things, and to encourage them to illustrate, expand and clarify their responses (Kitchen and Tate 1999). There is clearly the possibility of introducing researcher bias and subjectivity into the study. These are legitimate concerns that cannot be eliminated, however, in any method. In any case, an effort was made to reduce this possibility by using appropriate methods and techniques in combination to ensure triangulation of evidence (Flick 2002: Yin 1994).

3.3 Participatory Methods

This section is intended to outline the participatory research methods used and how these came to be applied in the research. Participatory field research projects are generally used to identify, describe and understand strategies relating to local communities, and in particular those strategies that seek to empower local communities by enabling them to articulate, document, and share their strategies. Participatory research methods offer ways to open up discussions in a non-threatening way, notably by focusing on local classifications, concepts and explanations. In doing so, the objective is not merely to find things out. By actively engaging people in the process of exploring and representing what they know, the participatory research process can validate such knowledge even while research participants may be capable themselves of interpreting and changing the research situation themselves (de Koning and Marion 1996). As such, these methods reflect a 'learning approach' (Korten 1980) in which the conventional separation between researcher and participant is broken.

In participatory research, knowledge is also not seen as a timeless static entity that can be possessed, transferred or lost. Knowing is rather regarded as a dynamic process that takes place through interaction. The research aims to create new forms of knowledge and new opportunities, for an analysis of the different experiences and knowledges of those taking part (Fals-Borda and Rahman 1992) calls for changes in the roles, attitudes and behaviour of researchers, who become facilitators and learners rather than only researchers (Chambers 1992). Through a process of mutual learning, people are equipped with the skills to do their own research and to enact their own solutions. Participatory research is, then, a personal *and* political process aimed at transforming diverse inequalities.

As noted, in the ethnographic approach the concern is to understand how societies and groups work from the 'inside' and how people's knowledge and viewpoints are shaped and negotiated by different social, cultural, political and economic processes which are embedded in the research field. The participatory research method, then, is a central research strategy by which researchers have done this (Cook 1997). The main features are that the researcher dives headlong into the field experiences, tries to observe from the participants' own perspective, but also influences what is observed owing to his or

her own participation. Thus, the researcher must deliberately immerse him/herself into the everyday life of a community, developing relationships with people who can reveal what is going on there, and writing accounts of how these relationships developed and what was learnt from them. This highly participatory and 'relaxed' technique enhances data gathering (see Hammersley and Atkinson 1995; Flowerdew and Martin 1997).

By using participatory research methods, however, I had some concerns about raising expectations in the Shuar communities--expectations that I was not in any position to fulfil. For example, at the initial point of access into the communities, I could not anticipate how the work would evolve and how community residents would perceive my presence in the communities. Even though my intention had been to participate and work with the communities in an 'overt' manner, I sometimes had to conceal that I was staying there as a researcher since some Shuar communities were not interested in the research or were even openly hostile towards researchers. Thus, I would not have been allowed to work in the communities if all of the information had been provided that might be considered necessary for informed consent. This of course raised very important ethical concerns.

The complex issues at stake here revolved around not only my personal responsibility as a researcher to behave in an ethically appropriate manner but also the ability to respond to changes in the field research experience itself. Taking responsibility for raising expectations and awareness are important but taking responsibility for providing what people want is another issue altogether. In many of the communities in which participatory methods are used, the root problem is poverty, marginalisation, and perceived powerlessness (Katz 1994). Without commitment to empowerment and to seeing the process of change as a wider project, therefore, participation soon becomes a rather empty endeavour. Indeed, for pragmatic, as much as for political reasons, the research would have faltered without using participatory methods.

Thus, putting participatory ideals into practice raises a number of ethical, political, practical and professional dilemmas. Wading into communities with ideas about empowerment and representation for those who are marginalised and powerless can create all sorts of problems (Punch 1986). In some cases, research may only involve greater participation for those that are most influential in the communities. In other

cases, problems may arise from a conflict of interests provoked by the demands of certain agendas, for example issues arising from deciding upon whether to resist or negotiate against the oil companies or involving women as equals in often strongly patriarchal settings. Not only can this kind of research threaten established interests within communities it can also unleash a backlash that further disempowers those taking part. However, participatory methods offer ways of sharing ideas and constructing new forms of knowledge that can bridge the gap between the researcher and participants. Extending this to focus on the concerns of different people within the communities by identifying issues for further study together with local people, takes this a step further. In the context of a larger project of social transformation, these steps bring professionals closer to understanding and appreciating some of the most important personal and political aspects of participatory research as well as (hopefully) to helping to promote peaceful and positive change in communities themselves.

The interview is a central strategy in participatory research. In general, interviews are generally unstructured or semi-structured, thereby taking on a conversational, fluid form, as each interview varies according to the interests, experiences and views of the participants (Keats 2000). It is characteristic of the interview that more or less open questions are brought to the interview situation in the hope that they will be answered freely by the interviewee (Flick 1998). Baxter and Eyles (1986) describe an interview as 'conversation with a purpose'. This sort of conversation offers the chance for the researcher and interviewee to have a far more wide-ranging discussion than would occur, for example, when a questionnaire is used. Although structured interviews may ensure less bias and error, they lack flexibility and often obscure rather than illuminate the interviewees' viewpoints. Unlike a questionnaire, the aim of the interview is not to be representative but to understand how individual people experience and make sense of their lives. The emphasis is on considering the meanings people attribute to their lives and the processes that operate in particular social and political contexts. The advantage of this method is that it is sensitive and people-oriented, allowing interviewees to construct their own accounts of their experiences by explaining and describing their lives with their own words (Flowerdew and Martin 1997).

Thus, interviewing can be used as a powerful tool in helping people to make explicit things that have hitherto been implicit-- to articulate their tacit feelings, perceptions and

understandings (Bennett 2000). They can be used both as a source of information about events, and as revealing the perspectives and discursive practices of those that produced them. Not only will this add to knowledge directly, but it can also throw light on the kind of threats to validity that we need to consider in assessing the information provided by an account. The fluid and individual nature of conversational-style interviews means that they can never be replicated; only corroborated by similar studies or complementary techniques (Valentine 1997).

In fact, it is impossible to understand strategies and forms of indigenous politics without reference to intentions, ideas and language of those that practice it. Geertz (1973) argues that only by inquiring into the experience of the actors, the shared understandings, the meanings they attach to an event, is it possible to gain insight (and even then we must allow for misunderstandings). McCracken (1988) stresses that the best gains from interviews are that they open up in-sights on meaning and reasons for actions, and they enable a researcher to getting closer to lived experiences; to exploring beliefs and ideas in terms of those under investigation.

Thus, two types of interview were crucial to my research since they provided explanations and understandings of the kind of struggles that are taking place in Ecuador, namely the semi-structured interview and the unstructured or informal interview. The former was used when for example interviewing state officials, corporate representatives, lawyers, NGO officials as well as various environmental and indigenous rights' group leaders. The semi-structured interviews with key informants were used to identify individuals that, because of their position or experience, were likely to have particularly broad or in-depth knowledge about particular aspects of certain issues and information that were of importance for my research. The semi-structured interviews were based on written lists of questions (see Appendix) or topics that need to be covered in a particular order but with a fairly open framework, thereby allowing for focused, conversational, two-way communication. In fact, the majority of questions were created during the interviews, allowing both the interviewees and interviewer the flexibility to obtain important details or discuss broader issues. Semi-structured interviewing is guided only in the sense that some form of interview guide is prepared beforehand, and provides a framework for the interview (FAO and IIRR

1995). The less an interview is structured, the more it allows for an exchange between the interviewer and interviewees, leading to a mutual understanding.

The unstructured or informal interview was used with research participants from the Shuar communities. Open-ended guided questions (see Appendix) were prepared and woven into the conversation, as appropriate. These unstructured interviews encouraged open-ended communication in a community setting where interviewees felt at ease. Here, opportunities for an interview often emerged spontaneously and unexpectedly from field contacts, such as when we sat around the fire while drinking *chicha*, preparing the food, or when I worked with the community members in the *chakras* or when we went fishing or hunting. This was a good technique for obtaining very detailed information. The unstructured interviews encourage a two-way communication and those being interviewed can even ask questions of the interviewer (Silverman 2001). The interviews also confirm what is already known but also provide the opportunity for learning more. Often the information obtained from the unstructured interviews will provide not just answers, but the reasons for the answers (Case 1990).

However, a problem when conducting research in a highly charged political situation is that people may be reluctant to be interviewed or unwilling to state their opinions candidly (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995). Here, it is important to note the difficulties I experienced when attempting to interview key state officials and corporate representatives. In fact, in almost all cases, it was impossible even to make contact with these actors because they never returned my calls or answered any of my e-mails. Therefore, the data I collected from them are mainly based on other primary sources, such as official documents, minutes from conferences and meetings as well as web-based material. Conversely, some people were keen to be interviewed in order to score political points. For example, some Shuar leaders sought to be interviewed in order to present political views or to make a statements on campaign issues of the day. Consequently, it was always important to be aware of where people were located within the complex network of political affiliations in order to attempt to evaluate the nature and utility of the evidence they provided (see also Madge 1994). Although it is impossible to arrive at an objective 'truth', through awareness of the political

positionality of sources, it is possible to make a more plausible interpretation of evidence, and to identify the different discourses in play on a particular topic.

Further, individual interviews restrict interaction to direct communication between the researcher and the participant. Group discussions were therefore used as a complementary method to interviewing to enable the exploration of differences *between* various actors since they provide possibilities for multiple interactions (Gross 1996). Thus, group discussions are particularly effective in capturing tacit or experimental knowledge, seeing understandings and feelings as socially situated rather than independent (Moore 1993). It would be false, however, to assume that because people have some externally identified commonality, such as membership of an ethnic group or gender, that they constitute a clearly defined interest group. Without a more subtle approach to differences and to the dynamic interaction within communities, there is a danger that the differences that matter locally can be overlooked to the detriment of the research. This is often the problem with gender differences, where Western notions of gender are often unproblematically imposed on other cultures (de Koning and Marion 1996).

Nevertheless, group discussions played an important role in my research. The major benefits of group discussions are that they encourage a co-operative approach to identifying and solving problems. Indeed, they can provide a forum for decision-making by consensus, provide the practical means of developing shared leadership, promote shared activities, and make it possible to share experiences generally. Furthermore, group discussions can bring together those who have a particular problem, for example those who cannot speak up at larger meetings (such as women). Flick (1998) argues that another feature of group discussions is that corrections made by the group concerning views that are not accurate, not socially shared or extreme, are available as means for validating statements and views. Group discussions therefore may reveal how opinions are created and above all, changed, asserted or suppressed in social exchange. Burgess et al. (1988: 310) suggest that "groups enable researchers and group members to explore together the embeddedness of environmental experience and values within different cultural contexts". Because group discussions often tend to promote enjoyable discussions, researchers are able to gain insights into the social, cultural, economic.

political and personal dimensions of an issue and a discourse, without informants feeling that their knowledge is being challenged or simply recorded by the researcher (Bedford and Burgess 2001).

To draw an example from my own field experience, workshops were held with villagers in Shuar communities to explore their knowledge about oil development and environmental degradation as well as to assess gaps in the elaboration of alternative development projects. In one of these workshops, representations of livelihood options made by federation leaders were also contrasted and discussed. I thus asked the villagers to describe their perceptions of oil development and livelihood options and to draw maps to illustrate this. As I had done this individually during the course of the research, I was interested to see what would emerge from the group. Relations of respect and kinship, as well as different perceptions of appropriate behaviour of men and women as well as of the different generations, limited what some individuals in the group felt they could say. In particular, it was interesting to see how Shuar women responded to the workshops since they are generally very quiet and withdrawn in other community meetings. One of the older men began a heated discussion about the problems that the oil companies had caused and how oil exploitation threatened the very survival of all indigenous people living in the Amazon region. This continued as they drew their maps. One man was handed a pen to write down what was said and to draw a map, as he was deemed more educated. All of the others called out what they thought should be included. When it came time to go through what the villagers had discussed and drawn, one of the women spoke confidently and explained the ideas and suggestions. As it had by then become part of the group process, rather than being 'merely' the product of her own ideas and experiences, she felt more able to talk about it in such a setting. Indeed, some points that she raised might have been difficult to speak about otherwise.

However, this strength of the method compared to interviewing individuals is also its main weakness. During data interpretation, problems often arise owing to differences in the dynamics of the group and the difficulties of identifying different views and interests within this dynamics. Thus, some community members may dominate (Shuar men) while others may refrain from entering into the discussion (Shuar women). The problem the researcher faces in mediating between the course of discussion and his or

her research interest is aggravated by the problem of having to accommodate the shifting dynamics of the group participants themselves (Hoggart et al. 2001). Yet, even though group discussions were difficult to facilitate and implement, they became central to my research. In fact, Burgess et al. (1988) emphasise the benefits of group discussions in that they bring together individuals with a shared interest in a particular topic and/or similar social background such that they may provide insights into the collective understanding of the complex political, social and economic situations.

This section has so far emphasised how the participatory research methods of interviewing and group discussions have been central to my thesis. There are many things, however, that cannot be expressed or observed verbally. These may concern the ways in which things are done or refer to things people take for granted (de Koning and Marion 1996). Furthermore, styles of interaction, from strategies of resistance or domination to the complex processes of negotiation and power in decision-making, cannot be easily described. For those working through translators, language issues can complicate interpretation. I am fluent in Spanish but many Shuar-organised assembly meetings and seminars were held in the Shuar language and in some Shuar communities few residents spoke Spanish, which inevitably complicated data collection. Thus, I had to rely upon the good-will of some younger men to act as translators. However, in turn this meant that some information may have been misinterpreted or chosen strategically according to what the translator deemed important. Further, terms may be assumed to have a shared referent when people mean quite different things and what people say may seem incoherent or incomprehensible to the researcher while making prefect sense to the interviewee (see also Irvine and Gal 2000).

As a result of these difficulties, the field research also drew on highly visual techniques, notably community mapping, to effect triangulation of the data as well as to reduce the impact of language barriers. Visualisation offers a powerful strategy for working with those whose voices are rarely heard, as well as for bringing about critical awareness and self-confidence among participants in the process (Chambers 1992). The principle of visualisation is to offer a means by which the information is not only collectively produced but also represented in a form that remains open to collective reference, both for cross-checking, validation and analysis. While the presence of the researcher

continues to influence the production of these representations, the focus activity shifts from the researcher to the representation (Lawrence 2002). The process of constructing a visual representation is in itself an analytical act: reflecting on what is included or why, as well as on the interactions between various aspects invites further analysis and discussion. In this way, maps, created by local people, can provide an invaluable visual reference for discussions with them.

There are numerous different approaches to the creation of maps, although for my purposes, the community mapping technique was most helpful. Community maps can be simple or detailed drawings of people, places, objects, actions or specific events (ELDIS 2004). They can also illustrate relationships and complex concepts, tell stories or simply make information more interesting and easier to understand. People remember pictures better than text and community maps are useful for recording indigenous knowledge, experience, and understandings of specific processes and actions. They are especially effective in communities with high illiteracy rates, as well as in cultures with oral rather than written traditions. They can help generate ideas and stimulate discussion and deepen the group's sense of identity, thereby even helping to create social consensus (Lawrence 2002).

Furthermore, community mapping techniques can offer ways to break the ice in initial contacts with people whose previous experiences of researchers and 'outsiders' may have been far from the kind of learning participatory methods aim to encourage. By providing an alternative mean for communication, community mapping techniques can involve participants in a research process driven by their own concerns and interests, in their own ways, using their own criteria and categories. It is an important tool for letting local people play an active role, not just as 'informants', but also as 'teachers', explaining to the researcher how they 'see' their community, as opposed to simply answering questions posed by the researcher (ELDIS 2004).

I would like to draw on an example from one Shuar community in Ecuador to illustrate how extensive differences within a community can be and how these differences may be represented in the community mapping exercise. I arrived at the Shinkiatam village for the first time in March 2004 and began to gather people for a participatory mapping exercise. After the purpose of my visit and the exercise had been explained, a small

group of men began to create a map, starting with the demarcation of the community boundary. Within a few more minutes, more men came to join them. As the men marked out the terrain using sticks on the ground, a debate started on the features they wanted to include. I noted points to bring up in later discussions and occasionally to probe further. Soon there was a crowd of people. Women stood at the margins, arms folded and silent. Children tried to join and were shooed away. Only the men were initially involved in making the map. I therefore suggested that the women and the children could make their own maps. The women then gathered twigs and stones and started to outline the rivers and the streams in the area, moving on to represent the village. As they did so they talked about the problems they faced. The children got very exited and started gathering stones, twigs and leaves and began to create a very detailed map. When the maps were finished, each of the groups in turn was asked to explain their maps to me and the others present. All had quite distinct and different concerns and it was very interesting to see that the children and women represented on their maps some of the very resources men had excluded and had been complaining about, revealing different ideas and priorities. It was clear that the villagers knew about their environment in a very detailed way. The mapmakers were proud of their product, which had absorbed their interest for several hours. I came away surprised at how much I had learned about the community in such a short time and how quickly a rapport had been established with people. Important lessons about difference and about the politics of the community had been learned.

Thus, community maps offer ways to explore knowledge, ideas and perspectives of different actors within the community who, in verbal settings, may remain entirely silent. However, visual representations are never merely factual accounts of how things are in the community. All are social acts and reflect the impact of the actors who produce them. This process is never neutral. The presumed agendas of the researcher, as well as those that take part in the exercise influence representations that are produced. It also gives the researcher a chance to observe the dynamics within the community to see who are local 'opinion leaders', who tend to dominate the discussion and who participates less.

The purpose of community mapping is that the end picture gives the researcher an excellent basis for identifying different views, interests and knowledge in the

community. The outputs of community mapping are particularly important, as they will usually create a 'framework' for the rest of the investigation. The researcher is unlikely to have the time to carry out an in-depth community appraisal, but must make the effort to thoroughly understand who is in the community and what they do, as this will allow her or him to decide how the villagers approach oil development and different livelihood options. As in the rest of the research, reporting should be carried out as an 'on-going' process. When the researcher reviews the findings and discusses the directions of the investigation, key information and learning should always be pulled out and recorded so that, at the end of the participatory research project, the reporting process should consist of simply 'putting together' what has already been discussed during the course of the field work.

Finally, I have rather assumed so far that indigenous accounts take an exclusively verbal and visual form. While this may be true in non-literate societies, for many settings written documents are an important source of data. In literate culture it is possible to draw on all sorts of 'inside' written accounts--documents produced especially for the purposes of the researched and those generated for other purposes. For the most part, I found myself dealing with the latter variety--there are many contexts in which members of organizations and groups produce written accounts. There are, of course, a quite bewildering variety of documentary materials that might be of some relevance to the researcher. They may be ranged from the informal to the formal or official. At the informal end of the spectrum, there are many 'lay' accounts of everyday life that the imaginative researcher can draw on for certain purposes. These include fictional literature, diaries, letters, web-based sources and media products. On the more 'formal' side, reports, documents and statistics, are widely used. Despite their authoritative appearance, these sources are not objective. Equally significant, official statistics are not bias-free (Arksey and Knight 1999). They are still valuable resources as long as the researcher, though, is aware of their limitations and shares the awareness with readers too.

Several sources of documentation exist relating to Ecuadorian state policies, land reforms, oil development, and indigenous movements. These included secondary sources that I came across before I left for the field research, such as books, journal articles and academic reports, as well as primary sources that came to my attention

during the field research. The latter involved minutes of indigenous assembly meetings or official meetings, reports written by NGOs, as well as newspaper articles and magazines. Secondary sources also became useful as interpretations of events of that period based on primary sources (for example, a history of oil development, state policies and indigenous mobilisations). In short, documents provided important access to information and perspectives, even as they enabled me in some cases to corroborate insights generated through other methods such as interviews or group meetings.

3.4 Summary

This chapter has outlined the ethnographic approach and associated participatory research methods that were used in this thesis. It also sought to highlight the specific contradictions and opportunities of my field research as it actually occurred. Ecuadorian oil development and state policies, the historical background of Ecuadorian indigenous mobilisation as well as a general outline of indigenous struggles in the Ecuadorian Amazon are the next thing that needs to be explored-- a task undertaken in Chapter 4. Once this is done, the thesis will then move to the core of the empirical analysis of the study in Chapter 5, 6, and 7.

Chapter 4 The Ecuadorian Context

This chapter explores the political, economic, social and environmental implications of neoliberalism and oil-based development in the Amazonian region in Ecuador (the *Oriente*) in order to provide the context necessary for the empirical analysis that follows in Chapters 5 to 7. The chapter is accordingly divided into four main parts. The first part briefly reviews the history of the *Oriente*--a history of marginality until the 1960s when oil was discovered there. The second part then explains how the Ecuadorian state has perceived oil development as key component of nation-building, economic progress and 'modern' status generally. The third part illustrates how indigenous federations emerged as a result of local land and resources struggles-- a highly significant socio-political change in Ecuador. The final part introduces our specific case study as it describes the history of the Shuar people in the Amazonian province of Morona Santiago.

4.1 Ecuador, the Amazon, and Indigenous People

Ecuador covers a total area of 283,561 square kilometres sharing a border with Colombia to the north and with Peru to the east and south (see Figure 4.1). The sovereignty of some 200,000 square kilometres of Amazon rainforest was for more than fifty years the subject of dispute between Ecuador and Peru and resulted in several wars between the two countries. The most recent conflict occurred only in January 1995 in the remote *Cordillera del Condor* in southern Ecuador (Lucas 2001). The long-running dispute was finally brought to an end however in 1998 when former president Jamil Muhuad of Ecuador and Peru's Alberto Fujimori signed a permanent agreement defining a border and awarding Ecuador unlimited (through not sovereign) navigation rights on the Amazon rivers (Sawyer 2004). Ecuador's environment, habitation patterns and land use are determined by three distinct geographical regions-- the coast, highlands and the Amazon rainforest (see Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1 Ecuador

Source: Kristian Bjureby 2005

The coast covers little more than one quarter of the area of the country. The sierra region, or central highlands, is situated between the two chains of the Andes, the western and eastern Cordilleras. These highlands allow for the growth of subsistence crops and livestock farming, and are the areas with highest population density. However, more than half of the population lives on the coast where, despite its proximity to the Equator, the climate is moderated by the cold Humboldt Current. Cash crops of bananas, cocoa, rice, coffee and shrimps are produced along the coast. The *Oriente* meanwhile covers about half of the country (9,930,000 hectares), and is divided into six provinces: Sucumbios, Orellana, Napo, Pastaza, Morona Santiago, and Zamora Chinchipe (Gedicks 2001) (see Figure 4.2.1).

Ecuador is home to fifteen indigenous groups that represent anywhere between 25 and 50 percent of the total national population and include the Shuar, Achuar, Quichua, Cofán, Huaorani, Zhiwiar, Zapara, and Siona-Secoya (Gedicks 2001) (see Figure 4.2.2). Clearly, the total indigenous population of Ecuador is a contested matter. Thus, according to official census data, indigenous people account for only 25 percent of the total national population (http://www.mmrree.gov.ec/).[1] However, according to various NGOs as well as indigenous federations, that percentage is closer to 50 percent (Lucas 2001; www.conaie.nativeweb.org). These rival estimates underscore the politically sensitive position of indigenous people in Ecuador. On the one hand, the former figure may be an attempt by the state to downplay the number of indigenous people in the country. On the other hand, the latter figure may be an attempt by the federations and their allies to play up the national position of indigenous people, notably by including under the heading indigenous people groups that the state labels as *mestizos*. The problem of establishing accurate population data on indigenous people is compounded in the *Oriente* where diffuse populations and oil-related political strife frustrate any effort to obtain agreed figures. Thus, Shuar leaders claim that there are 50,000 Shuar there (P. Tsere 2004; Nayandey 2004), whereas official figures specify only 40,000 Shuar (http://www.mmrree.gov.ec/). However, and for our purposes, the estimate of 50,000 Shuar seems most plausible in light of the distribution and size of Shuar settlements in the *Oriente* and indeed is widely used by independent scholars and observers (e.g. CDES 2002; Gedicks 2001; Koster 2004).

---

[1]Thus, in 2004, they accounted for 25 percent of the total population compared to 65 percent *mestizos*, 7 percent Spanish and others, and 3 percent Afro-Ecuadorians (www.worldbank.org/ec). Official figures here are: Highland Quichua 3,000.000; Lowland Quichua 60,000; Shuar 40,000; Huaorani 2,000; Awa 1,600; Chachi 4,000; Tsáchila 2,000; Siona-Secoya 1,000; Cofán 800; and Achuar 500 (http://www.mmrree.gov.ec/). Here, it is important to note that I was unable to find any census data of the total number of *mestizos* in the *Oriente*.

Figure 4.2.1 Ecuadorian Provinces and Towns

4.2.2 Indigenous Groups and Protected Areas

4.2.3 Oil Block Concessions

Figure 4.2.1 Ecuadorian Provinces and Towns

4.2.2 Indigenous Groups and Protected Areas

4.2.3 Oil Block Concessions

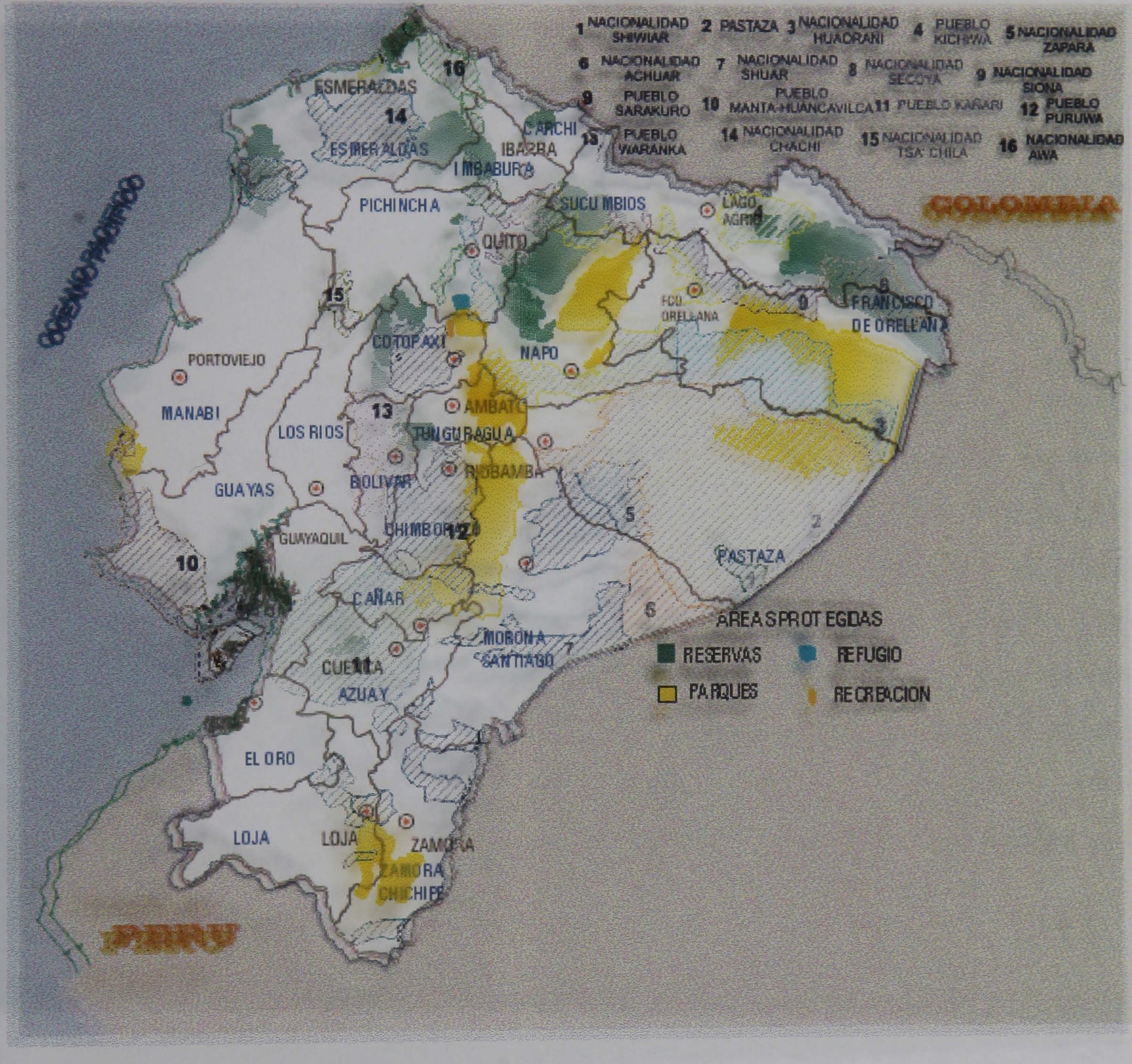
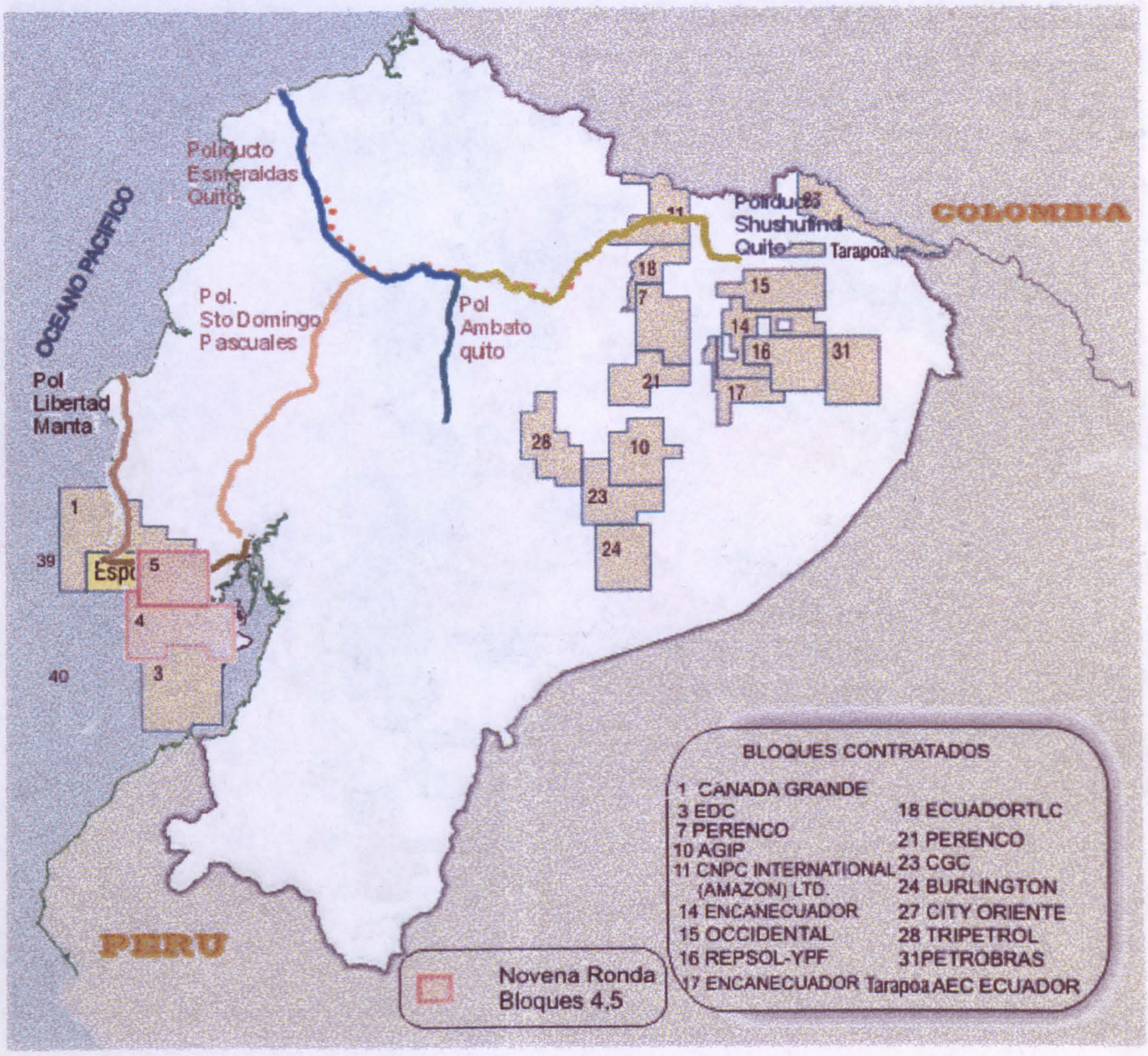
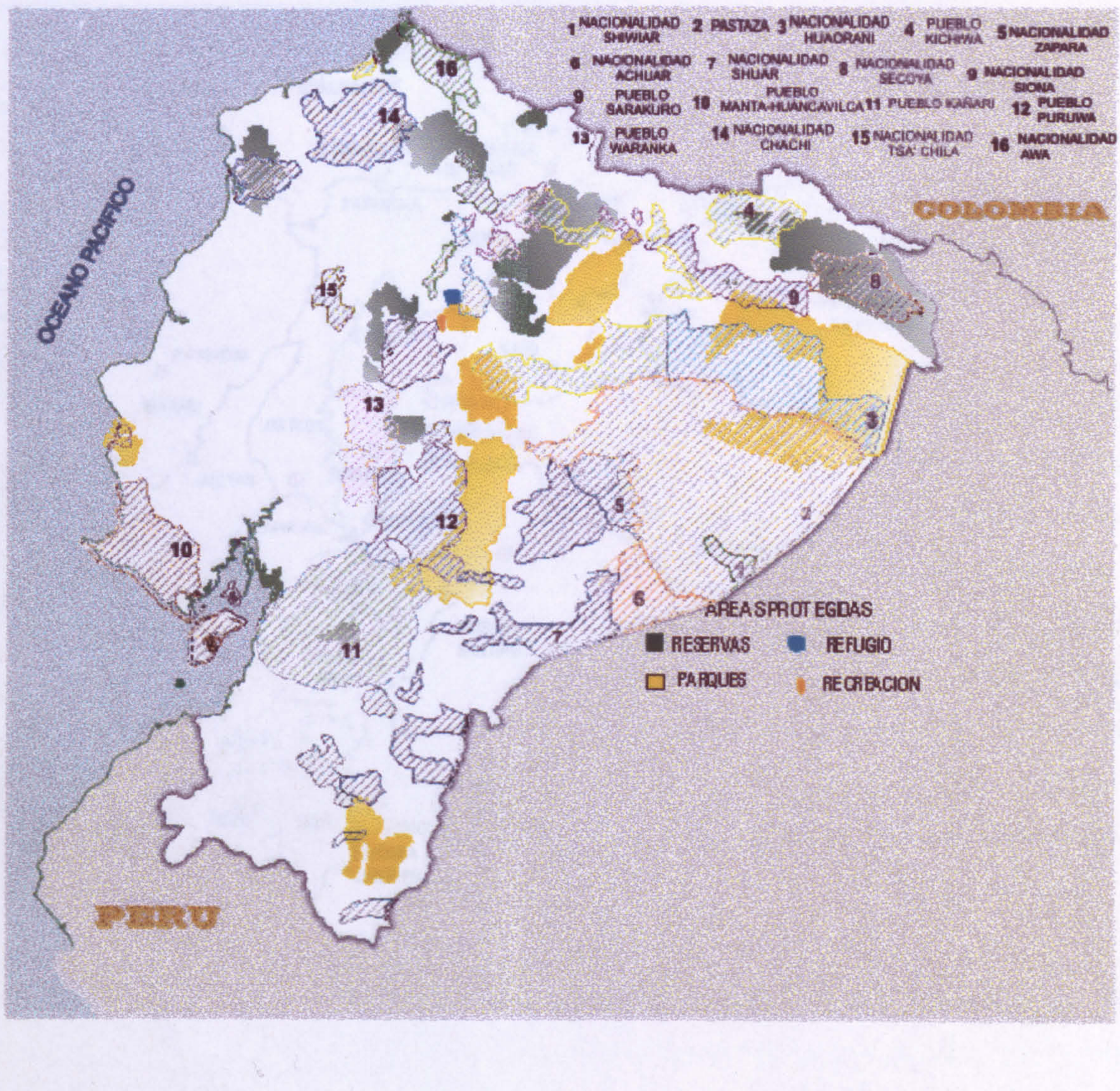


Figure 4.2.1 Ecuadorian Provinces and Towns

4.2.2 Indigenous Groups and Protected Areas

4.2.3 Oil Block Concessions


OCEANO PACIFICO
Poliducto
Esmeraldas
Quito
Pol.
Sto Domingo
Pascuales
Pol
Ambato
quito
Pol
Libertad
Manta
Poliducto
Shushufindi
Quito
Tarapoa
COLOMBIA
PERU
1
39
5
4
40
3
11
18
7
21
15
14
16
31
17
28
10
23
24
BLOQUES CONTRATADOS
1 CANADA GRANDE
3 EDC
7 PERENCO
10 AGIP
11 CNPC INTERNATIONAL (AMAZON) LTD.
14 ENCANECUADOR
15 OCCIDENTAL
16 REPSOL-YPF
17 ENCANECUADOR Tarapoa
18 ECUADORTLC
21 PERENCO
23 CGC
24 BURLINGTON
27 CITY ORIENTE
28 TRIPETROL
31PETROBRAS
AEC ECUADOR
Novena Ronda
Bloques 4,5


1 NACIONALIDAD SHUAR
2 PASTAZA
3 NACIONALIDAD HUAORANI
4 PUEBLO KICHWA
5 NACIONALIDAD ZAPARA
6 NACIONALIDAD ACHUAR
7 NACIONALIDAD SHUAR
8 NACIONALIDAD SECOYA
9 NACIONALIDAD SIONA
9 PUEBLO SARAKURO
10 PUEBLO MANTA-HUANCAVILCA
11 PUEBLO KAÑARI
12 PUEBLO PURUWA
13 PUEBLO WARANKA
14 NACIONALIDAD CHACHI
15 NACIONALIDAD TSA' CHILA
16 NACIONALIDAD AWA
OCEANO PACIFICO
COLOMBIA
PERU
AREAS PROTEGIDAS
RESERVAS
REFUGIO
PARQUES
RECREACION

The history of the *Oriente* has been characterised on the one hand by geographical marginality in relation to neighbouring Amazonian frontiers, and on the other hand by a marked rise in recent years in the number of connections within the region and with Ecuador's main political and economic centres. Despite the increasing importance of these relations, however, the *Oriente* was virtually autonomous until mid-twentieth century. If looked at from the perspective of the Amazon basin as a whole, the opening up of the region to the world economy brought most territories, except for the *Oriente*, into regular contacts with centres of regional and transnational trade located along the main Amazon River. Yet, the *Oriente* was characterised by what Taylor (1994) has called an 'extreme sociological, economic and political marginality'. In historical perspective, then, that region did not emulate the changes introduced into other Amazon frontiers by the growth of the nation-state, the development of the industrial world-economy, or general frontier dynamics until comparatively recently.

However, since the 1960s the *Oriente* has been increasingly incorporated into wider economic and geopolitical processes linked to other parts of Ecuador and beyond. Insofar as these processes penetrated livelihood activities taking place in the *Oriente*, regional, national and transnational processes cannot be viewed as simply happening in the background, but rather need to be viewed as constitutive of the Amazonian 'reality' itself. In particular, the *Oriente* has received much attention since the Ecuadorian government incorporated the region into large state-designed schemes for land reform, colonisation and development (for example, oil-extraction).[2] Thus, oil-based development in Ecuador is best understood against the backdrop of shifts in the world's economy over the last three decades.

Beginning in the late 1960s, Western economies began to experience recession as economic growth faltered with declining productivity and profits. In the early 1970s, the 'oil shock' intensified this decline. Seemingly overnight, OPEC (Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries) increased the price of petroleum, causing production costs to skyrocket as energy outlays soared (Karl 1997; Martz 1986). For nascent oil-producing countries such as Ecuador, OPEC's actions prompted an economic boom. In

[2] For overviews here, see Rodrigo and Calderon (1988), Gerlach (2002), Hvalkof 2000; Sawyer (2004), Yáñez (1992), Pallares (2002).

1967, Texaco had discovered the country's first commercial petroleum reserve and brought it and subsequent reserves into production in 1972 (Kimerling 1992). In 1973, Ecuador's military regime joined OPEC, making the country the organisation's smallest producer. New oil revenues launched Ecuador, a small agrarian nation, into the wider global market economy (Sawyer 2004). Over the following years, Ecuador became heavily dependent on oil exports such that crude oil represented approximately fifty percent of the state's budget in 2003 for example (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1 Main Export and Import Products in Ecuador

TRADE				
(US$ millions)	**1983**	**1993**	**2002**	**2003**
Total exports (fob)	2,196	3,066	5,030	6,036
Oil	1,533	1,152	1,833	2,372
Bananas	143	568	969	1,099
Manufactures	..	544	1,315	1,564
Total imports (cif)	1,329	2,562	6,431	6,534
Food	..	..	..	..
Fuel and energy	56	88	294	664
Capital goods	481	984	2,022	1,789
Export price index *(1995=100)*	139	89	125	138
Import price index *(1995=100)*	108	84	79	82
Terms of trade *(1995=100)*	129	106	157	170

Source: World Bank 2004

The military government used oil revenues to finance tax breaks, offer credits, and embark on an ambitious project to build Ecuador's infrastructure and social services (roads, communication, health care and education systems). This process led to extraordinary growth rates in the 1970s (Petroleum Economist 1999).[3] However, in the early 1980s the fall in the world price of crude oil as well as the increase in international lending rates plunged Ecuador into an economic crisis as the country experienced difficulties in repaying its debt (Karl 1997). This occurred at the same time as Ecuador returned to democratic rule when Osvaldo Hurtado took over the presidency from Jamie Roldos in 1982. Between 1974 and 1982, the foreign debt had risen from eighteen percent to sixty percent of the gross domestic product (GDP). In his first major speech as president, Hurtado declared: "We neither can nor should have continued to resort to external indebtedness…the age of petroleum prosperity has come to an end…it is necessary to begin an age of austerity" (Hurtado 1990:226).

[3] Between 1970 and 1981, Ecuador's GDP grew by 147 percent (Thoumi and Grindle 1992)

Thus, over the course of the 1980s three successive democratically elected regimes began to introduce a neoliberal program that sought to increase export production, in the line with 'comparative advantage' (especially oil), open the economy for foreign investment and trade, and reduce the state's productive and distributive functions (Yáñez 1992). For example, Hurtado implemented Ecuador's first 'modern' austerity program when he created new taxes, devaluated the currency, eliminated subsidies and public spending (Schodt 1989). The regime of Leon Febres Cordero (1984 to 1988) demonstrated an even stronger commitment to austerity and free market principles by reducing trade restrictions and tariffs (Thoumi and Grindle 1992).[4] During the centre-left presidency of Rodrigo Borja (1988 to 1992), international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) placed stricter conditions on Ecuador before the country could receive loans. They demanded that Ecuador cut the fiscal deficit, reduce inflation, reform taxes, further liberalise trade and tariffs, and encourage foreign investment--conditions generally implemented under structural adjustment programs (SAPs). However, Borja refused to privatise state-owned industries and he compensated for having raised the price of fuel and electricity by increasing the minimum wage, freezing the costs of basic foods, and creating work programs (Sawyer 2004).

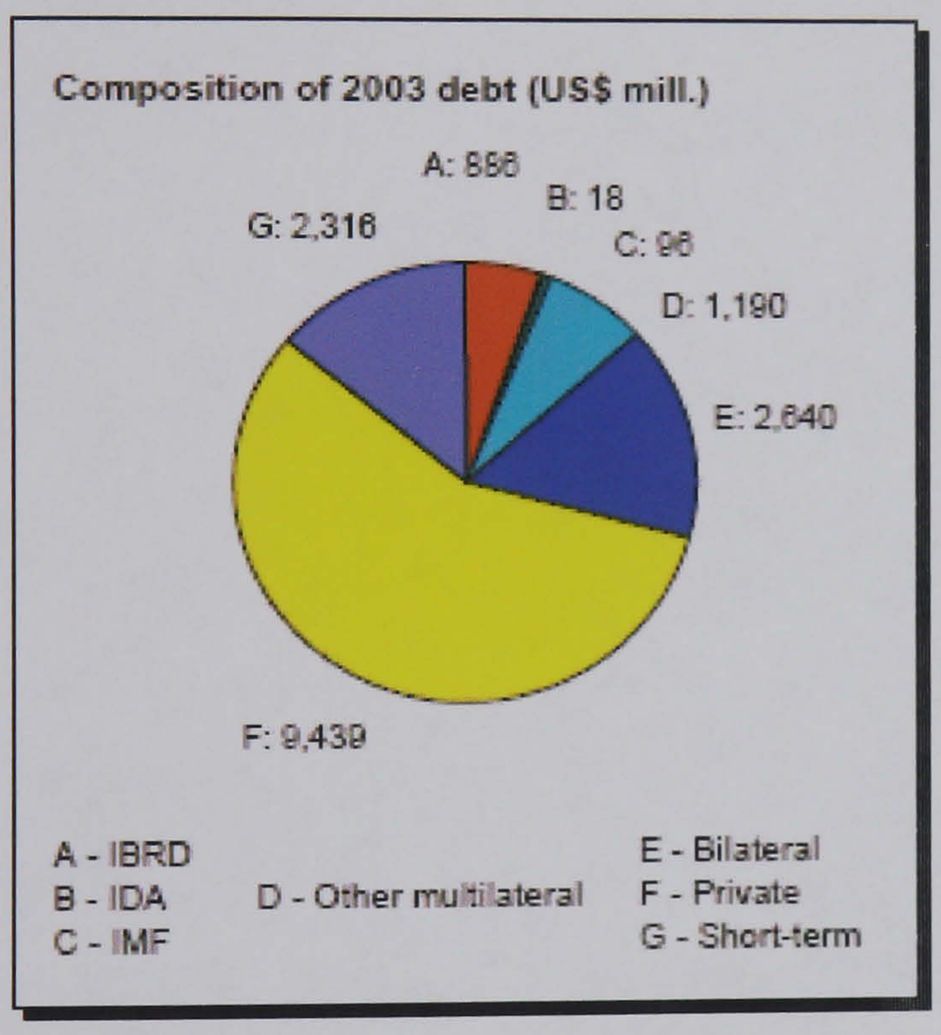
Given these political vicissitudes, it was not until 1992 that neoliberalism really began to transform the country's political economy. Ecuador received new loans only on the condition that it implement specific policies to intensify export production, privatise public property, and cut government spending. This would, it was claimed, stimulate transnational investment, boost General Domestic Product (GDP), reduce state expenditure, and increase state efficiency (Wray 2000). The hope was that these policies would further facilitate national and transnational capital generation and that they would therefore be able to pay for amounting foreign debt, which had more than doubled between 1983 and 2003 (see Table 4.2)

[4] However, by 1987 opposition from the congress, military and popular groups forced Febres Cordero to reverse many of the neoliberal policies he had implemented during the first two terms of his term.

Table 4.2 Ecuador's Foreign Debt

EXTERNAL DEBT and RESOURCE FLOWS

(US$ millions)	1983	1993	2002	2003
Total debt outstanding and disbursed	7,595	14,136	16,313	16,585
IBRD	201	759	835	886
IDA	36	29	19	18
Total debt service	795	920	2,193	2,066
IBRD	35	160	141	136
IDA	1	1	1	1
Composition of net resource flows				
Official grants	21	32	..	..
Official creditors	38	82	49	88
Private creditors	60	304	1,386	169
Foreign direct investment	50	474	1,275	1,514
Portfolio equity	0	0	..	..
World Bank program				
Commitments	57	145	48	119
Disbursements	47	52	26	152
Principal repayments	20	94	87	94
Net flows	27	-42	-61	57
Interest payments	15	68	55	42
Net transfers	12	-110	-116	15



Source: World Bank 2004

Indigenous leaders were sceptical, however, about the utility of these policies. The example of oil development, and Texaco's record in particular, caused them to be apprehensive about the neoliberal drive to intensify oil development in the *Oriente*. Indeed, as will be demonstrated next, over the course of three decades oil exploitation had transformed the *Oriente* and not to the liking of most indigenous people.

4.2 Oil Development in the Amazon Region

The *Oriente* holds a geopolitical and symbolic value for the Ecuadorian state insofar as national pride and ambition is conflated with the region's crucial economic value. As evidenced in the 1995 border conflict between Peru and Ecuador, as a result of which Ecuador lost half of its Amazonian territory, the region has held a special place in Ecuadorian national identity. Though politically and socially marginalised, the *Oriente* has been the centre of Ecuador's representations of nationhood: "Throughout Ecuadorian history, the *Oriente* has long been a crucial site in the contest over the configuration of the 'nation'" (Sawyer 1992: 75). Over 150 years since the country's independence, four wars and five redrawings of the Amazonian borders defined Ecuador as increasingly smaller and Peru larger. However, until 2000, official maps ignored these 'disadvantageous' redrawings insisting that the nation's 'historical heritage' was its sovereign right to much of the western Amazon.[5]

Whether in schoolbooks, on government buildings or on the national flag, Ecuador has been depicted as twice the internationally recognised size by expanding its Amazonian territory based on prior claims. For example, the national flag depicts a ship on a lowland river that meanders towards a snow-capped mountain (see Figure 4.3). According to the *Instituto Geográfico Militar*, the mountain peak illustrates Chimborazo (Ecuador's highest Andean volcano peak), the river represents Guayaquil, the green space represents the Pacific, and the green ship represents Ecuadorian trade (Instituto Geografico Militar 2004). Yet, for many in Ecuador, the mountain *was* the central Andes, the river *was* the Amazon, the green space *was* the Amazon basin, and the ship represented Orellana's voyage *in* the Amazon (Sawyer 2004). In short, this visual topography reflects a perspective based on an enlarged vision of what constitutes the *Oriente*.

---

[5] The internationally recognised treaty of 1942 (the Rio de Janeiro Protocol) came to represent the moment of 'betrayal' when Ecuador lost half of its Amazonian territory to Peru. The 'rightful' border according to Ecuador was outlined at independence in 1830 (Sawyer 2004).

Figure 4.3 The Ecuadorian Flag

Source: Instituto Geográfico Militar 2004

Further, the *Oriente's* symbolic value as a source of national pride is reinforced by the region's growing economic and political importance. Indeed, since the mid-1960s, state schemes have sought to transform and integrate the region through new infrastructure and communication systems in order release its valuable natural resources (oil, minerals, and lumber). As noted, the incorporation of the *Oriente* has been fundamental to the Ecuadorian national economy since oil was found in the region (Wray 2000).[6] The state still perceives oil development as a key to nation/state building and crucial for gaining economic progress and modern status. Indeed, it has attempted to control use of major portions of the *Oriente* by demarcating it as available for oil exploitation. Thus, and although the state has always marginalised the *Oriente* politically and culturally, it has nonetheless seen the hydrocarbon and agricultural development as being crucial for the overall advancement of Ecuador.

Here, it is important to provide a fairly detailed history of property rights based on Ecuador's legal history as suitable backdrop to the later analysis of this thesis. This is notably a history of the adoption of Western models and the incapacity to implement these models effectively. It is also a history of reforms that combined some recognition of local practices with attempts to make people conform to national laws (Sawyer 2004). This complex process is crucial for understanding why the Shuar communities

[6] The oil company Shell first found oil in the southern *Oriente* in the 1920s, but the firm failed its attempts to extract the reserves. It was not until 1967 when Texaco found oil in the Northern *Oriente* that oil became a heightened practical state and corporate concern.

have mobilised to defend their land and territory in the way that they have. Two sets of legal codes are of particular interest here: the 1964 *Ley de Desarrollo Agrario* (Agrarian Reform Law) and the 1994 *Ley de Ordenamiento del Sector Agrario* (Agrarian Development Law).

Firstly, the 1964 *Ley de Desarrollo Agrario* (Agrarian Reform Law) encouraged colonisation of the *Oriente* since the region was considered uninhabited and thus in need of economic transformation. The law abolished Ecuador's feudal system of serfdom and led to the expropriation of large land holdings and former Church lands in the highlands. This political move was included in a transmigration scheme which was intended to relieve highland population pressures, using colonisation of the Oriente as "a substitute for a land reform that has failed to break up the large estates of the Coast and Highlands" (Salazar 1977: 22).[7] Indeed, the agrarian reform law created a safety valve for the economic tensions and population pressure in the highlands as well as in the coastal areas. But the primary focus of the land reform was colonisation, not redistribution. To facilitate colonisation, the Government concurrently passed the 1964 *Ley de Tierras Baltidas* (Law of Fallow Lands) thereby declaring uncultivated lands uninhabited and hence available for colonisation.[8] Moreover, IERAC *(Ecuatoriano de Reforma Agraria y Colonizazíon*), the Government land-titling agency, was formed in 1970 and was made responsible for titling land in the *Oriente* (see IERAC 1994).

As a result, state-sponsored as well as spontaneous colonisation rapidly transformed agrarian reality in the *Oriente*. Indigenous land was declared *Tierras Baltidas* and unoccupied, and was thereby distributed to small landholders and peasants from the highlands. This is summed up in the words of Fabian Nauas Rodriguez (2004), a senior official of the Department of Environment, who stated in an interview: "By relocating land to make it available to poor farmers, by establishing the agrarian reform law, the state allowed the agricultural sector to flourish". The effect of the 1964 laws was that the Ecuadorian state claimed the first right to ownership of all 'unclaimed' land in the national territory but with the idea that this would be followed by a transfer of rights from the state to citizens and/or to private businesses.

---

[7] See Hecht and Cockburn (1989) for a comparable account on Brazil.

[8] Between 1964 and 1994 approximately 6,500,000 hectares of the approximately 7,500,000 hectares adjudicated as private property resulted from colonisation, not expropriation, and the majority of that colonisation took place in the *Oriente* (4,500,000 hectares) (IERAC 1994).

The second thing to note about legal changes introduced by the state since the 1960s is the progressive elaboration of a market-driven contest for land and resources. Thus, the 1994 *Ley de Ordenamiento del Sector Agrario* (Agricultural Development Law), not only ended any notion of land reform, but it also provided that all land (including indigenous communal land) could be placed on the open market, thereby transforming the reality of Ecuadorian agriculture.[9] In recent years, the Ecuadorian state has further modified legal agreements and policies in order to accelerate oil development. The administration of President Sixto Duran Ballen (that took office in 1992) had faced a difficult time when the price of oil was declining, the national debt was rising, and Ecuador was hence under growing pressure to attract foreign oil investment (Melo et al. 2002). Ballen thus determined to further privatise public lands, including some claimed by the Shuar, in favour of foreign investors as a primary means of increasing investment and reducing debt. With military backing, as well as World Bank and other development loans and grants, a change in policy thus took place (CDES 2002b). As part of this change, IERAC was transformed into the *Instituto Nacional del Desarrollo Agrario* (INDA). Much more than simply a change in name, INDA now presented a more aggressive policy and discourse for the seizure and redistribution of indigenous territories (Bebbington 2001). Incentives for the privatisation of land under a neoliberal agenda were thereby strategically incorporated into the 1994 Agricultural Development Law (see also Chapter 6).

The neoliberal reforms embodied in the 1994 law provoked a crisis in governance and accountability in Ecuador that framed the Shuar mobilisations that are a central concern in this thesis. This new legislation superseded the Agrarian Reform Law established thirty years before and was designed to 'modernise' the country. Like the agrarian sector, the hydrocarbon sector was a key component of this effort (Sawyer 2004). The importance of the Amazonian region in this new national project could also be seen in the state motto, *El Ecuador ha sido, es y sera País Amazónica* (Ecuador has been, is, and will always be an Amazonian State), which was regularly proclaimed in justifying the neoliberal reforms.[10]

---

[9] The 1964 Agricultural Reform Law gave land to colonists but did not provide for buying and selling that land (Bebbington 2001).

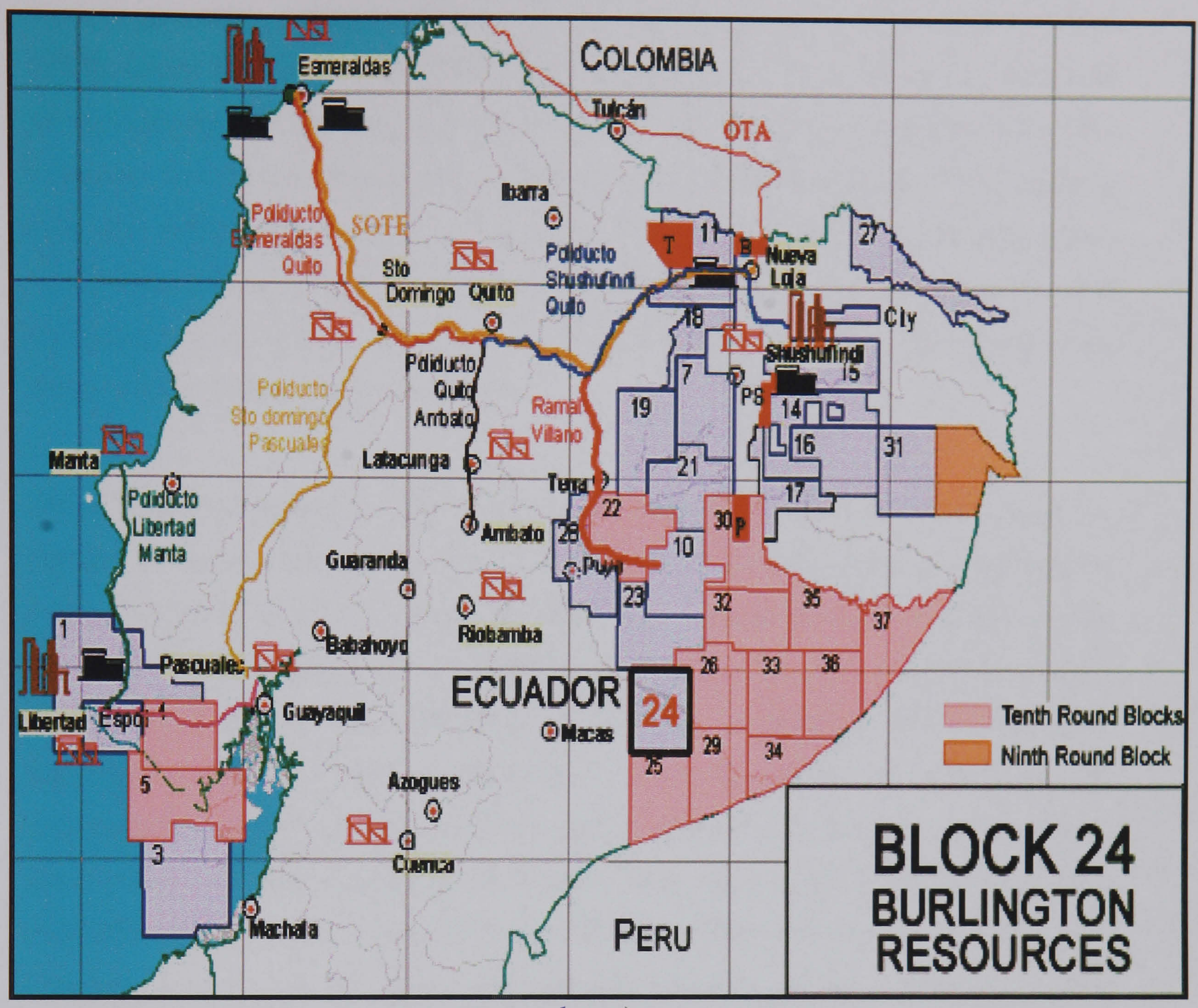
[10] This is a long-standing motto dusted down in 1994.

The 1994 Agrarian Development Law occurred against the backdrop of a large-scale expansion of oil development in the Amazon region that was already heightening political tensions in the area. The colonisation of the *Oriente* was seen by the state to be a complement to oil development. Indeed, a new Hydrocarbon Law has been passed in 1993 to facilitate oil development and this in turn linked to the creation of vast new network of roads and other infrastructure. As with the 1994 agrarian legalisation, the Hydrocarbon Law was a response to international pressure that linked access to new loans under structural adjustment programmes to the entrenchment of neoliberal policies based on resource-based comparative advantage (CDES 2002c). This pressure, in turn, placed the *Oriente* at the centre of national efforts to capitalise on Ecuador's plentiful resources. Hydrocarbon and agro-industrial development of the region thereby became crucial for Ecuador's wider efforts to 'modernise' or even survive in the global economy.

The administration of President Rodrigo Borja Cevallos (2000 to 2003) reflected these concerns as it sought to implement further programs designed to boost oil development. It sought to further liberalise and privatise oil production, guarantee current and future land security to oil TNCs, and intensify export production of oil and other natural resources. Indeed, oil development was the centre-point of the administration's plan entitled '*Apertura Ecuador: 2000* (The Opening of Ecuador, 2000). The plan was announced in October 2002 and included the ninth round of oil block leasing (see Figure 4.4)[11], the construction of the pipeline *Oleoducto Crudo Pesado* (OCP), the opening of new oil reserves in Yasuni National Park, the leasing of thirteen oil block concessions, and the privatisation of the state-owned oil company PetroEcuador. The ninth round was planned to include as much as 2.5 million hectares of new oil lands, divided into thirteen blocks (Chavez 2002; Figueroa 2002). As originally planned, most of the blocks were in the provinces of Napo, Pastaza and Morona Santiago in the central and southern Amazon with two further blocks for bid on the west coast (see Figure 4.4).

[11] Oil block 24 was incorporated in the ninth round, which is situated in Shuar territory, and has in turn made Shuar land (including communal lands) available for oil exploitation.

Figure 4.4 Ninth Round of Oil Block Concessions



Source: Amazonwatch 2004c (www.amazonwatch.org)

The ninth round of oil concessions was thus part of a national plan aimed to develop the oil sector through neoliberal reforms promoted by the World Bank and IMF. President Lucio Gutierrez (elected in January 2003) continued to facilitate this process. Before he was elected, Gutierrez had assumed a more critical stance, attacking Ecuador's dollarization'[12], the IMF, and the FTAA (the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas). Once in office, however, his economic policies were firmly based on a letter of intent originally signed by his predecessors with the IMF in February 2002 mandating neo-

[12] On the 9th January 2000, President Jamil Muhuad announced the dollarization of the Ecuadorian economy, which was an attempt to stabilize the economy and encourage economic growth. The hope was that the dollar would attract foreign investors who were previously reluctant to invest in Ecuador due to its economic and monetary weaknesses. This has meant that, on the one hand, inflation is under control, the economy is growing and it is easier to do business in the country, however, on the other hand, the Ecuadorian economy is becoming less goods-oriented and more service-oriented. Jobs are still scare and interest rates are still high. The government continues to rely heavily on borrowing to finance its expenditures.

liberal reforms. According to the agreement, resources from the ninth round would be used to guarantee payments to multilateral banks over the next few years (CDES 2002b; Lopez 2002). Starting in 2006, therefore, eighty percent of the oil income would go to financing debt, whereas just twenty percent of it would go to a stabilisation fund to protect the country from oil price swings. In order to make payments on Ecuador's debt, the IMF measures called for privatisation of the oil industry, including of the state-owned PetroEcuador, thereby it was hoped opening up the doors for transnational corporations to invest in expensive oil explorations in the *Oriente*, especially to the South (CDES 2002c; Chavez 2002).

These high-level agreements failed to account for local reactions to oil development. Indeed, all ninth round blocks were withdrawn from the offer due to opposition by indigenous groups and their allies. In retreat, the Ecuadorian state clarified that the Amazonian blocks would not be leased until the right of indigenous people to prior consultation had been honoured (Melo et al. 2002; Pachamama 2003a; Petroleum Intelligence Weekly 2002). Meanwhile, foreign companies also rejected the government's attempt to open up the oil sector to private investment by refusing to place bids in its latest leasing round in 2003. This was a result of strong indigenous opposition against oil development in the *Oriente*, notably from the Shuar people (see Chapters 5 to 7). At the same time, popular social movements in Ecuador have demanded that control of the country's oil resources remain in the hands of the state oil company PetroEcuador. As the government's oil policy thus fails to appease powerful actors on either side of the oil debate, the country's current production of oil is rapidly declining due to outdated technology and a lack of new capital.

Although indigenous movements succeeded in changing some aspects of official plans, success here was far from conclusive. Above all, the outcome of the renegotiated ninth round of oil block leasing was noticeably ambiguous. On the one hand, the indigenous organisations 'forced' the Ecuadorian state to recognise the indigenous movement as a potent force to be reckoned with, even as oil companies were unable to initiate oil exploitation (CDES 2002c). On the other hand, indigenous opposition did not manage to change crucial provisions in the plan, such as the expropriation of communal holdings or that these holdings could still be sold should two-thirds of the residents

wish to sell the land (Chavez 2002). Most frustrating for indigenous actors was the dissonance between their constitutionally guaranteed right to control and manage their ancestral territories collectively, and the obstacles that were put in the way to carrying out that right. All of which is not to imply that indigenous opposition failed. If nothing else, the negotiations showed that indigenous people had become imposing political actors and that, if only momentarily perhaps, they had carved out a novel terrain for political expression.

4.3 Indigenous Mobilisations

Following the struggles over local land and resources that began in the 1960s, the emergence of indigenous federations has been one of the most significant socio-political changes in contemporary Ecuador. In fact, the Shuar founded the first Latin American ethnic federation in 1964 with the help of Salesian missionaries, the *Federación de Centros Shuar*, which by 1997 had begun identifying itself as the *Federación Interprovincial de Centros Shuar* (FICSH). At the time of my research, FICSH represented the majority of indigenous people in Morona Santiago and was arguably one of the most active indigenous federations in Ecuador.

In 1980, meanwhile, Amazonian indigenous groups formed *Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas de la Amazónia Ecuatoriano* (CONFENAIE) in order to defend their lands against state-designed development projects and colonisation. In 1986, these same groups linked forces with indigenous groups in the highlands and on the coast to form the *Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador* (CONAIE), a national indigenous movement dedicated to defending indigenous people's concerns as well as agitating for social, political, and educational reform (CONAIE 1999). These federations organised specifically to defend indigenous lands and resources and have thereby played a key role in representing indigenous concerns. Indigenous claims and discourses have meanwhile evolved within the context of rapidly changing national politics, on-going international debates and new legal instruments regarding indigenous rights. Generally, indigenous claims have been based on the right to self-determination, the right to local land and resources, and the strengthening of indigenous identity and cultures (Espinosa 1999; Stiffler 2003).

From the beginning of the 1990s, large-scale indigenous mobilisations shook the country in response to state-led initiatives discussed above. One such mobilisation took place in May 1990 when highland indigenous people occupied the Santo Domingo Cathedral in Quito and embarked upon a hunger strike. Launched to protest the long unresolved agrarian issue, these acts of protest inspired the first CONAIE-led nation-wide indigenous mobilisations to obstruct the economic strategies of the Ecuadorian state (Field 1991, 1996; Meisch 1994; Ruiz 1992). A week-long nation-wide *Levantamiento* (uprising) paralysed the country with roadblocks, market boycotts, local government office occupations and land repossessions (Lucas 2001). Through the leadership of CONAIE, indigenous people forced the government (however momentarily) to enter into negotiations over land disputes. As a part of these negotiations, the *Organización de los Pueblos Indígenas de Pastaza* (OPIP) from Pastaza province presented a proposal called the *Acuerdo Territorial* (Sawyer 1997), which contained two themes that challenged conventional understandings of indigenous place in the nation--namely plurinationality and self-determination. The proposal called for the communal titling of ancestral lands as well as political, economic and social control over them by indigenous residents. The Borja regime publicly denounced the *Acuerdo Territorial* by maintaining that OPIP was seeking "to dismember national territory" and that "you are not a state within a state".[13]

Another indigenous-based mobilisation took place in April 1992 when OPIP embarked upon one of the most effective such initiatives in Ecuadorian history. The march resulted from several years of inconsequential negotiations with the state described above. Ironically, the demands of the 1992 march were in principle the same as those of the 1990 *Acuerdo Territorial*, yet the state's reaction was different (Abya Yala 1992; OPIP 1992). Thus, the Borja administration sought to cleverly circumscribe indigenous control of ancestral lands by formally granting indigenous people approximately fifty-five percent of their territorial demands (through allotted communal titles to nineteen land blocks) (IERAC 1994). However, while having these land titles would help to impede further colonisation of indigenous lands, these titles crucially did not guarantee control over activities within them. Importantly, titled ownership of territory does not supersede the state's right to subsoil resources, which is guaranteed by the Constitution (Article 247)--a crucial factor of course to the fate of oil development.

---

[13] The quote is cited in Sawyer (2004:45).

However, the 1992 accord gave the indigenous communities back *some* control over their territory. At the same time, though, the titled blocks of land were demarcated in an arbitrary and haphazard way that disregarded natural boundaries like rivers and ridges, and ignored specific ethnic claims. This step showed a vast and intentional disrespect of any notion of indigenous nationality. Further, and as a result of the 1994 Agrarian Development Law which was intended to strengthen individual titles to land (see above), it was now possible for communal plots to be subdivided and sold. This appeared to threaten the geographical integrity of indigenous communities and led to another massive protest in 1994. This was the most militant demonstration to date (Zamosc 1994). The roads to more than fifty oil wells throughout the *Oriente* were blocked and most of the main highways were shut down, even as at least two dozen people were killed (Sawyer 2004). The president declared a state of emergency, but the protests continued for over a month. In the end, the government was compelled to negotiate with CONAIE, and the agrarian law was revised in May 1999. CONAIE thus forced the state to recognise the diversity of the agrarian sector and the specific role of indigenous interests as a mobilising force. The Agrarian Development Law now speaks of the agrarian sector in social rather than simply economic terms. Local subsistence-oriented food production is theoretically as important as agribusiness export production. Agrarian reform is to be 'perfected' rather than abolished and the distribution of land is seen to be as important as its concentration (Bebbington 2004). Yet, at crucial junctures--articles pertaining to communal land holdings, expropriation, and land rights--CONAIE only succeeded in softening the wording and adding a few points to the legal phrasing making the law simply more ambiguous rather than fundamentally challenging its neoliberal tenets (Ruiz 2000).

Finally, in January 2000 thousands of indigenous people marched into Quito where they demanded (and got) the resignation of President Jamil Muhuad even as they called for the dissolution of the executive, legislative and judiciary powers of the state (Ruiz 2000). The *levantamiento* (uprising) started on 21st January with the taking of parliament by the indigenous people supported by army officers rebelling against the

government, IMF implemented policies, fuel prices and transportation costs.[14] Two weeks of demonstrations, strikes, and road blockages brought the country to a standstill and forced the government to negotiate with the leadership of the uprising. As a result, leaders of the civic-military insurrection installed a 'Junta of National Salvation', consisting of Colonel Lucio Gutierrez, Antonio Vargas of CONAIE, and the former president of the supreme court of justice, Carlos Solórzano (Lucas 2001; Macas 2001).

The record of mobilisation combined with the ability to mobilise and the growing influence of indigenous people as political actors led to the idea of indigenous participation in national elections. This decision resulted in the birth of *Movimiento de Unidad Plurinacional Pachakutik- País Nuevo* (Pachakutik Movement for Plurinational Unity-New Country) in the 1996 election that sought to field candidates at the local, provincial and national levels. The first candidate was Luis Macas who was one of the founders of CONAIE and indeed its president at that time. When asked why the indigenous movement was taking part in the 1996 elections, Macas stated it was just another form of struggle: "The organisations have various ways of fighting for their claims…until now we did not see the need to take part in elections, because we did not have the process in place. Now we are facing the challenge" (Macas 2001:5). In the election, conservative Abdala Bucaram won but Pachakutik nevertheless won ten percent of the vote. At the end of 1996, a National Constituent Assembly was convened by indigenous and social movements represented by Pachakutik to put forward proposals to reform the National Constitution. This resulted in the 1998 popularly constituted National Constituent Assembly, which introduced a series of constitutional reforms recognising the collective rights of indigenous people and which declared Ecuador a multicultural and pluriethnic country.

This constitutional process represented a watershed in Ecuadorian history. The 1998 National Constitution thus incorporated rights specifically related to indigenous people and recognised them as members of the 'indivisible Ecuadorian state' even while allowing them to 'define themselves as nationalities that have ancestral roots'. Implicit

---

[14] There had been a growing discontent among officers in the army since early 1999 demanding action to put an end to the corruption of bankers and imprison those that were still in the country and the extradition of those that had fled the country. The Government ignored the officers' demands. The announcement of the 'dollarization' in 2000 was the last straw and turned both indigenous peoples and many in the military against the Government.

in this new language was the collective rights of the indigenous people to protect their territory and natural resources. For example, Article 84, number 5, states: "Indigenous and afro-Ecuadorian peoples will be consulted regarding plans and programs of exploration and exploitation of non-renewable resources found in their territories and that may affect them environmentally or culturally; to participate in the benefits these projects bring to the extent possible, and receive compensation for social and environmental harms caused by these projects". Article 88 states that "all state decisions that may affect the environment, must take into account ahead of time the criteria of the community, which must be informed. The law guarantees its [the community's] participation". [15]

Another milestone in Ecuadorian legal history also came in 1998 when the country ratified the International Labour Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Rights, which most importantly guarantees the collective and participatory rights of indigenous people in development projects (ILO 1989). This treaty reinforces Ecuador's Constitution by stating clearly that indigenous populations have the right to be consulted regarding administrative decisions that affect them, particularly when it comes to the use of natural resources. It specifies that "the peoples concerned shall have the right to decide their own priorities for the process of development as it affects their lives, beliefs, institutions, and spiritual well being"(Article 6 of the ILO 169). Article 15 declares that where the state retains control over subsoil resources, governments must consult with affected populations to determine what impact exploitation of such resources may have. This is of critical relevance to Ecuador, because as we have already noted Article 247 of the Ecuadorian Constitution preserves the state's claim over subsoil resources, such as oil.

Despite these new legal measures, several major issues, such as the declaration of plurinationality, conflicts related to oil development and the recognition of indigenous people's legal regimes remain unresolved. The 1998 Constitution does not recognise indigenous groups as nationalities, although it does state that indigenous people, who define themselves as nationalities, for instance, are part of the Ecuadorian state (Espinosa 1999). Further, the Constitution mentions the right to participate when it concerns the use of renewable resources, but when non-renewable resources are at

[15] These articles are obtained from the Government Registry, Quito, in 2003.

stake, indigenous involvement is limited to the lesser right of being 'consulted' about decision-making.

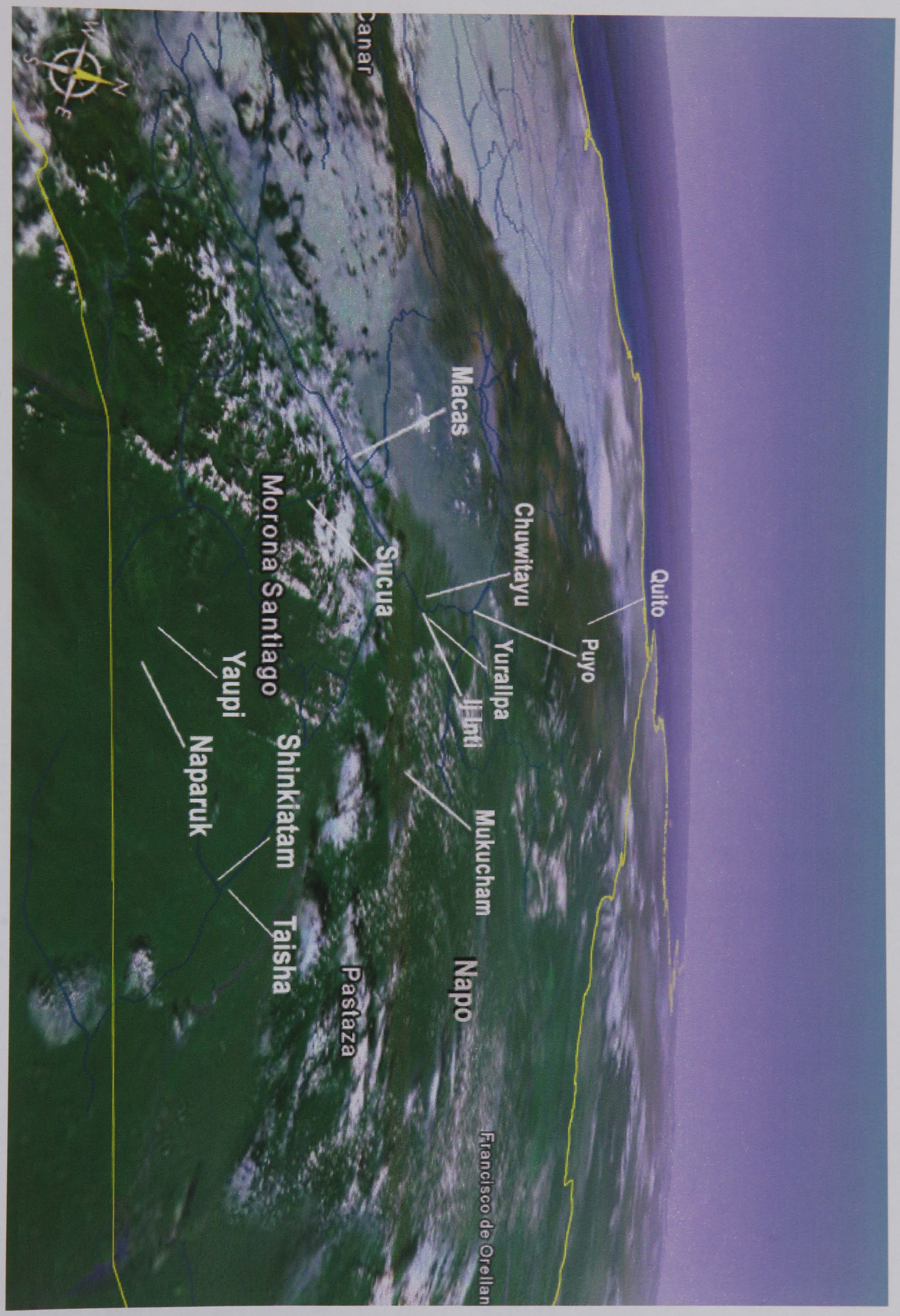
As a result of these legal reforms, the struggle between the Ecuadorian state, transnational corporations and indigenous people has increasingly become based upon legal issues. The thesis thus notably examines in Chapters 5 to 7 the emergence of a highly organised indigenous movement and its struggles against two US oil companies, ARCO Oriente and Burlington Resources, and Ecuadorian neoliberal policies at the turn of the millennium. Against the backdrop of mounting government attempts to privatise and liberalise the national economy and introduce oil-based development, Shuar people have incorporated new legal and political measures into their strategies of resistance, partly as a result of recent changes in national laws and newly signed international agreements. Through collective action and new political and legal strategies, the Shuar have sought to reconfigure the material, political and symbolic meanings of territory, nationhood and sovereignty in Ecuador.

4.4 Shuar History and Culture

Before turning to the details of Shuar struggle, it is important first to understand how the Shuar have become organised politically and to see how Shuar federations have emerged from a specific historical, cultural and political context.

The term *Shuar* signifies 'man' or 'people' and refers to the indigenous group *Untsuri* Shuar, which today simply are called the *Shuar*. The Shuar belong to the *Jívaro* linguistic group of the western Amazonian basin, which includes the *Shuar, Achuar, Huambisa, Aguaruna* and *Mayna* people (Harner 1972). In most of the literature, the *Untsuri Shuar* have been referred to as the *Jívaro*, but this latter term, which has no meaning in the Shuar language, has been discarded because of its derogatory connotation (Hendricks 1996). They occupy the region *Transkutukú* in the province Morona Santiago (see Figure 4.5). Their long-standing territory is bounded on the west by the eastern scarp of the Andes, and much of it is further isolated from the highland passes by the steep *Cordillera Cutucú*, which along with their position above the reach of navigable rivers, have proved to be substantial barriers to colonisation in the past.

Figure 4.5 Morona Santiago Province



Source: Kristian Bjureby 2005

It is not known how long the Shuar have occupied their territory. Archaeological evidence suggests that a portion of Shuar territory was occupied by pottery-making, horticultural populations 2.5 millennia ago (Salazar 1981), but a direct link to the contemporary Shuar is difficult to establish. Shuar households were traditionally organised in dispersed neighbourhood groupings, and operated relatively autonomously. There was a sexual division of labour which made subsistence agriculture and food preparation the focus of women's' activities, while men hunted, fished and participated in revenge raids and war. According to Harner (1977), a hierarchy of shamans also existed, called *Uwishint'* by the Shuar, and they provided curative or vengeful bewitching services in exchange for material goods.

In the past, the Shuar fiercely defended their territory against foreign penetration and were known for shrinking the heads of their enemies. Harner (1972) states that the Shuar practice of shrinking the heads of their enemies after inter-tribal war raids (*tsantsa*) aimed to contain the avenging soul of the victim in the head, and killing was thus seen as a necessary action to acquire '*arutam* soul power'. Rituals conducted with the *tsantsa* (shrunken heads) were believed to transmit power to the killer and his family. The shrunken heads belong to the past now (thankfully!) and can only be seen in the collections of some museums in the country.

While little is known about their history prior to the Spanish conquest, in the 1520s the Inca emperor, who had conquered all the highlands of Ecuador, attempted to conquer the Shuar. Yet, the Shuar resistance was so fierce that he fled, allegedly attempting to placate the Shuar with gifts as he retreated (Salazar 1981).

The Shuar were characterised by a particular form of resistance to Spanish colonial troops through the use of guerrilla techniques (Taylor 1984). Indeed, during the colonial period the Shuar resisted conquest whether by the Spanish conquistadors or the missionaries (Salazar 1977). Such opposition culminated in a Shuar uprising in 1599 when more than 20,000 Shuar destroyed the mining town of Logronõ, killing over three quarters of the population, and poured molten gold into the mouth of the governor so that he died. As a result of these actions, the Spanish had to retreat to the highlands, Harner (1972:1) observes: "Only one tribe of American Indians is known ever to have successfully revolted against the empire of Spain and to have thwarted all subsequent

attempts by the Spaniards to conquer them: the Jívaro, the *Untsuri Shuara* of Eastern Ecuador". Indeed, among anthropologists as well as the Ecuadorian public, the Shuar are famous for their "fierce independence and courageous resistance to conquest" (Hendricks 1996:1) and it is argued that the Shuar were never conquered, either by the Incas or by the Spaniards (Harner 1972; Karsten 1935).

The sustained hostility of the Shuar people to outside intervention is perceived as the major cause of the colonial failure in the *Oriente*. Shuar success here is related to differences between Shuar and Spanish culture and to the fact that the conquerors were totally alien to and unable to comprehend the Shuar culture and environment (Perruchon 2003). Indeed, that the Shuar settlements were widely dispersed, their political structure was atomised (good for carrying out guerrilla attacks), and the biophysical climate was viewed as inhospitable by the Spaniards who were unfamiliar with the dense and hilly terrain as well as great distances, all posed difficulties for the would-be conquerors.

Beginning in 1892, the Spanish missionaries nonetheless started arriving in Shuar lands. The Catholic Salesian Order was granted 'mission reserves' there by the government (Barrerera and Trujillo 1997). According to Botasso (1983), the latter supported the missions because it was believed they would 'tame' the ferocity of the Shuar and thereby make colonisation possible (and indeed, white and *mestizo* immigration from the highlands increased from about the mid-twentieth century). Since the colonists were seen as 'civilised', the regime encouraged them to move into Shuar lands as their presence was believed to have a 'civilising' effect on the Shuar. In 1955, the then President Velasco Ibarra, wrote: "The Salesians are obliged to civilise and indoctrinate the savage tribes of Shuar territory, to support and to increase the founding of colonist and aboriginal settlements, and to carry out all activities necessary to bring about these ends" (cited in Salazar 1981:605). In return, the Salesian mission received tax reductions, financial assistance, free medical treatment, free trips in government planes, and even salaries for missionaries devoted to teaching activities (Salazar 1981).

The Salesians thus established successful missions in the 1920s in the Upano Valley linked to colonisation which followed on the western frontier of Shuar territory; cattle ranching also grew there as a result (Salazar 1981). Such 'development' continued

throughout the twentieth century. Thus, Harner (1972) observed significant changes in Shuar culture between the beginning of the twentieth century, when the interior Shuar (those east of the *Cordillera de Transkutukú*) had very little contact with whites or *mestizos* and in the mid-twentieth century when missions had been successfully established in this part of Shuar territory. Military bases accompanied some missions, and these together with the teachings of the missionaries largely halted revenge assassinations and *tsantsa* (inter-tribal head hunting) raids by the 1960s. The Shuar were thus forbidden to kill, to visit their sacred falls, to take *Ayahuasca* for the practice of their rituals, or to drink *chicha* (a traditional alcoholic brew made out of *juka* (cassava) mixed with the saliva of the women for fermentation) (Whitten 1981). Further, the Salesian missionaries concentrated the Shuar population into *centros*, and separated children from their families in mission boarding schools, creating significant changes in Shuar social structure (see Chapter 5).

A small evangelical mission was also established in Makuma in 1945 (see Figure 4.5), which grew to have several outstations, and provided medical assistance (Harner 1972). These activities meant that the evangelic missionaries won the faith of the Shuar and were able to significantly decrease the level of assassinations and war raids. Indeed, while many Shuar never converted to Christianity, in the communities where I conducted most of my research between 2002 and 2004, the missionary influence nonetheless remains visible and strong.

Against the backdrop of the 1960s struggle for land in the face of rapid land colonisation and of impending petroleum development, the creation of federations of Shuar communities proved to be one of the most significant socio-political changes in modern Shuar history. This will be discussed in detail in Chapters 5 to 7. Here, it is important to note that their creation reflected concerted attempts to maintain control of Shuar lands and resources, notably while asserting Shuar culture and identity. Thus, with an awakening of Shuar identity and an awareness of their fragile political situation, the Shuar response thereby shifted steadily from individualised everyday resistance strategies (Scott 1985) to collective political action.

The first action to unite the Shuar against the colonists took place in the town of Sucua, in Morona Santiago, with the assistance of the Salesian missionaries. Thus, in 1964,

some Shuar leaders founded the first indigenous federation in Ecuador, the *Federación de Centros Shuar*, which developed into the *Federación Interprovicional de Centros Shuar* (FICSH)--one of the local-level federations that plays a central role in the episodes related in this thesis. Salazar (1977:29) regards the creation of the federation as a rather "unexpected move on part of the Shuar, considering the independent, individualism, egalitarianism, and even hostility among groups that have characterized Shuar social structure". Ironically, the very form of this resistance reflected state practices. Thus, the basis for collective action against state policies originated in or was a result of a prior state policy.

The hierarchic and centralized structure of the federation differs notably from the traditional egalitarian and decentralized social organization characteristic until then among the Shuar. By the early 1970s, many Shuar families had settled in administrative units called *centros*. These units were independent but as they became aware of the need to coordinate their operations with neighbouring *centros*, they founded *Asociaciónes* (associations); the first one was notably the *Asociación de Sucua*. As Salazar (1977) points out, even the *centro* represents a clear deviation from a traditional concept of a Shuar community. Similarly, Perruchon (2003:149) stated, "the only similarity between a *centro* and the traditional settlement pattern is the distribution of households within the *centro*". The Shuar formerly lived in widely dispersed and politically autonomous settlements composed of extended families, where membership was not formally, or even often clearly defined (Barrera and Trujillo 1997; Harner 1972). The spatial and cultural distance between the missionaries and *mestizo* society based in the near towns and the communities was great indeed.

Thus, the *centro* and *asociación* system of the Federation developed in response to the Ecuadorian state's interest in the *Oriente* as a political solution to land shortage in the highlands and the subsequent migrations of colonists from the highlands into the area. Beginning in the 1960s and intensifying with the 1964 Agrarian Reform Law, *mestizos* from the highlands colonised a vast corridor along the forested plateau at the base of the highlands in Morona Santiago (see Chapter 6 for a detailed analyses of land reforms in Shuar territory). As noted, *Instituto Ecuatoriano de la Reforma Agraria y la Colonizacíon* (IERAC), the state land titling agency, issued a series of agrarian reform laws thereby legalising state possession of all 'undeveloped' land and encouraging

colonisation of the 'uninhabited' *Oriente*. Land titles were then given individually to colonists that cleared and put the land to 'productive use' (*Ley de Desarrollo Agrario*).[16] For the Shuar communities this policy shift was a disaster. Large-scale colonisation stemming from this shift placed immense pressure on Shuar lands. Property rights were granted by IERAC and it initiated appropriating Shuar lands in the 1970s.

Thus, this system had several disadvantages. First, IERAC declared that the majority of Shuar traditional lands were not in use (Federación Shuar del Ecuador 1974), even though these were forests used for hunting, fishing and gathering, as well as important uncultivated areas supportive of Shuar traditional agriculture. Second, these lands were therefore put up for sale as individual plots to non-Shuar for farming and cattle ranching (the buyer was likely to be a colonist since most of them had better economic resources than local Shuar). As stated by Hendricks (1996:218): "The new laws emphasised the right of the peasant to obtain title to the land, and later ones added to the concept of 'social function' of the land". That is, the land, being a productive asset must benefit the nation as well as the individual owner. The result was to force indigenous groups such as the Shuar to imitate the colonists' modes of production or risk losing the land to colonists.

Faced with this wholesale land grab, Shuar communities themselves initiated a process to secure titles to their lands by clearing the forest for approved practices such as cattle ranching. Thus, Shuar cattle ranching grew initially in response to colonist threats to their land, and the difficulty in obtaining land titles on other grounds. The easiest way to do this was to clear the land for cattle ranching. In the sense that the creation of pastures had the effect of preventing the government from expropriating it, the adoption of the cattle industry by Shuar families protected their claims to land (Hendricks 1996). The Shuar that lived along the colonisation frontier used the clearing of land for pastures as a way to demonstrate that the land was under cultivation and thereby acquire legal title to it from IERAC. This strategy proved successful for the Shuar in

---

[16] The legal requirements for gaining titles of the land at this time in fact stated that fifty percent of the area targeted in land claims must be cleared and put to productive use.

securing a land base for their communities. In particular, the Shuar that lived along the colonisation frontier used the clearing of land for pastures and cattle ranching.

Consequently, with the guidance of the Shuar federation, the Shuar gradually changed from being semi-nomadic, hunting and gathering horticulturists into sedentary cattle raisers (see Chapter 6 and 7). This important transition generated a new sense of cultural identity. It also involved steady growth in this Shuar federation, which by 1997 incorporated thirty-two *centro*-based associations, with the average *centro* consisting of twenty-five to thirty families, mostly related by marriage (Barrera and Trujillo 1997). By 1997 the Shuar federation had also begun identifying itself as the *Federación Interprovincial de Centros Shuar* (FICSH). At the time of my research, FICSH represented the majority of indigenous people in Morona Santiago and was arguably one of the most active indigenous federations in Ecuador.

Meanwhile, in 1990, some Shuar associations created a new federation, the *Federación Indenpendiente del Pueblo Shuar del Ecuador* (FIPSE)--the second local-level federation that plays a central role in this thesis. FIPSE was created in Makuma, with the assistance of the Evangelic missionaries as a response to the new discourse and politics of indigenous territories and cultural identity.

The mobilisations that took place in Morona Santiago between the late 1990s and the early 2000s were the culmination of the Shuar federations' long-standing struggles and to gain legal titles to indigenous lands, to assert Shuar cultural identity, and to control the regions natural resources. Shuar leaders and community members, some with relatives in the northern *Oriente* and others who had actually worked there as contract labourers for Texaco, believed that along with further colonisation, the devastating effects of oil in the north would soon threaten their territory (Chumpi 1999). Self-organisation represented the most secure vehicle through which the Shuar might have a voice in influencing, if not directly shaping, the direction of their future.

One clear illustration of this is when the *Federación Indenpendiente del Pueblo Shuar del Ecuador* (FIPSE) organised a protest march and a political strategy in 1998 to present a legal injunction under the 1998 National Constitution and the ILO Convention 169 (ILO 1989) against the oil company ARCO Oriente (discussed in detail in Chapter

5). As we will see in the next chapter, this represents one of the first legal interpretations of the collective and territorial rights of indigenous people under Ecuador's new constitution and recently ratified international treaties.

4.5 Summary

This chapter has explored how indigenous movements have developed in response to land reforms, neoliberal policies, oil development, and agricultural and rural development strategies foisted on them by outsiders, and the ways in which these movements have engaged in formal and informal political processes. Yet, such mobilisation reflects the political and economic context of its day and especially the intersection between indigenous people, their organisations and the state. Here, a long history of animosity and conflict between the Shuar and the Ecuadorian state has been noted. Such conflict will be a recurring theme that unites the main empirical chapters of this thesis.

The following three chapters investigate how Shuar struggles for local authority and control have been designed to combat successive waves of outsider-imposed development. The increasingly sophisticated discursive and material strategies of the Shuar federations that underpin such struggles will be documented in Chapter 5, 6 and 7. These strategies can be broadly seen as a desperate attempt to define a clear and resolute cultural identity linked to a well-defined ancestral territory with the possibility of strengthening access to natural and material resources in the region. Chapter 8 finally discusses the broader implications of the study.

Chapter 5 Cultural Identity Politics

This chapter examines the cultural identity politics of the Shuar movement in Morona Santiago with a particular focus on recent cultural and political strategies enacted by it. Specifically, the aim is to examine how indigenous politics developed in opposition to state and oil company development plans, concentrating on how the Shuar federation, *Federación Indenpendiente del Pueblo Shuar del Ecuador* (FIPSE) and *Federación Interprovincial de Centros Shuar* (FICSH) designed new strategies to assert collective rights mediated by locally distinctive cultural identity. The central concern is to understand how cultural identity became central to an indigenous politics of resistance, notably in light of a 1998 legal action by the Shuar people against the oil company ARCO Oriente. This case is used as a point of departure for unravelling the forces at play in the development of indigenous politics in the study area.

This chapter thus examines the complex relations between cultural identity, environmental conflicts, indigenous movements and oil development. This is a story not unlike one told by Arturo Escobar (1992, 1998, 2001), in which local actors in Colombia have scaled up their political and organisational practices as a response to new state policies and development projects. Escobar (1992: 62) views Latin American social movements as simultaneously political, economic, and cultural in character: "social movements must be seen equally and inseparably as struggles over meanings as well as material conditions, that is cultural struggles". However, while recognising the symbolic significance of these struggles, it is also essential to stress the importance of structural constraints and material conditions that form the base of such struggles.

While the issues of cultural identity, resource access and territorial rights have been on the agendas of indigenous organisations throughout Latin America, in recent decades they have been of particular salience in the *Oriente*. It was here that in the 1960s the first indigenous organisation emerged on the continent, linked to the Shuar people (see Chapter 4). While these organisations and the indigenous movements of which they form a part, have undergone considerable change, indigenous organisations still play an important role in defining regional and national political agendas, in facilitating control over land and resources access for their communities, and in helping to recover and re-

construct indigenous cultural identity. These processes take place in the context of changing economic and political conditions, notably linked to the spread of neoliberal policies and oil development.

A core theme here, as well as in later chapters, is that of indigenous resistance. True, we saw in Chapter 4 how the history of oil development in the *Oriente* reflected successful strategic alliances between the state and transnational corporations from the 1960s onwards that were able to overcome much of this resistance. Here we will see, however, how indigenous people can nonetheless exert significant influence over oil exploitation. In some cases what James Scott (1985) calls 'weapons of the weak' are used and indeed these have been prominent strategic devices used by the Shuar. Yet forms of culturally-based resistance have also been used with one such form being that of political mobilisation organised around the calculated assertion of cultural identity. This chapter assesses this latter strategy starting by exploring the first clearly organised indigenous mobilisation against oil development in Morona Santiago. As will become evident, over the course of recent years, the relationship between transnational corporations and the state, the disputed terms structuring this relationship, and the ability of local people to voice their demands within these dynamics, became the terrain for considerable debate about culturally informed notions of appropriate social and political practice.

This chapter is organised into three main sections. The first one examines Shuar cultural and political mobilisation, and how Shuar organisational processes have shifted from purely community-based mobilisation to a more multi-faceted and multi-scale political movement. Here, we will consider how Shuar federations politicised notions of cultural identity that are then embedded in strategies of resistance. The second section examines the concepts of culture and identity in the Shuar communities themselves, which is seen in important ways to differ from the cultural identity politics devised by the Shuar federations. It is crucial to understand these differences among the Shuar since there are implications for federation mobilising strategies designed to protect the cultural identity of the Shuar. The third section meanwhile explores how these strategies have prompted new alliances around but separate from the state--in some cases prompting divisions and factionalism within and among Shuar communities.

5.1 Shuar Cultural and Political Mobilisation

In this section the main concern is to make sense of the work of the Shuar federations, *Federación Interprovincial de Centros Shuar* (FICSH) and the *Federación Indenpendiente del Pueblo Shuar del Ecuador* (FIPSE). Specifically, it considers how the federations have mobilised discourses of cultural identity in strategic ways in order to defend existing land claims, access natural and material resources, and make collective rights claims against the Ecuadorian State and the oil companies. Against the backdrop of the 1960s struggle for land in the face of rapid land colonisation, the creation of federations of Shuar communities proved to be a significant socio-political change in modern Shuar history (see Chapter 4). In particular, their creation reflected concerted attempts to maintain control of Shuar lands, notably by asserting Shuar cultural identity.

In attempting to understand the ways in which the Shuar people have mobilised to maintain access to resources and land, and how cultural identity is embedded in these strategies, it is essential to provide a detailed analysis of the specific processes of organisation, as well as the symbolic and material forms that they take. There are combinations of discrete actions here, emerging out of a continuously shifting relational context where interests and ideas are negotiated and resisted. That said, these strategies are more or less coherent in that they have emerged as a response and reaction to state policies and development projects, notably linked to oil exploitation.

Table 5.1 Changes in Shuar federation FICSH: discourse and focus

1970s	**1980s**	**1990s**
Indigenous federations	Legal titles to community land	Increasing political mobilisation
Organising communities	Cultural and political identity	Legalising territory
Legalising community land	Involvement in national politics	Political and cultural identity, nationality, and self-determination
Agricultural diversification and cattle ranching activities	Assistance by NGOs	External funding and political support

Source: this Author (2004)

Table 5.1 illustrates how the Shuar Federation, FICSH, shifted its discourse and focus over time.[1] First, in the 1970s, much work focused on basic organising in Morona Santiago and on seeking a political voice for Shuar communities in the region. One of the key roles of the federation was to seek redress for cases of personal discrimination and land violation. Here, it became a political advocate, making claims for collective and individual rights that had previously been denied the Shuar by the state. In the process, the federation sought to carve out its own identity in order to foreground problems unique to indigenous people in Ecuador at the time, thus explicitly identifying itself as an ethnically-based federation rather than a class-based organisation like some that worked with *mestizo* colonists (Federación de Centros Shuar 1974; Hendricks 1996).[2]

These were tense times in the region. By the 1970s, much of the land in Morona Santiago was being eyed by smallholder colonists or religious-based missions (Barrera and Trujillo 1997). Indigenous land claims were not legally recognised by the state at the time and Shuar communities were thus vulnerable to encroachment by colonists. As such, and as Perruchon (2003:140) remarked, "obtaining legal rights to land that the Shuar inhabited was one of the first and primary goals of the federation". Similarly, Elías Catani Tivi (2002) a former FIPSE leader asserted: "By entering the political arena as a federation, we have been able to defend our cultural identity and our lands and to consolidate our position in the *Oriente* in the face of advancing colonisation and oil development".

The process of land disputes and legal issues regarding land titles will be examined in detail in Chapter 6. Here, it is simply important to note that one of FICSH's primary objectives during this early period was the legalisation of Shuar land claims, and many of its projects were designed to facilitate agricultural modernisation, including cattle production and marketing of 'traditional' crops to assist the claims along (see also Chapter 7). Importantly, the emphasis of the Ecuadorian government of the day was on

---

[1] Since FIPSE was only created in 1990, this table only examines FICSH. Further, the table does not rank the different issues in order of importance. However, we can see how land claims and cultural identity maintain a strong focus among the organisational strategies of the federation throughout the period.
[2] In contrast, Perreault (2001) examines how one regional indigenous federation emerged during the 1970s in the Napo region (central *Oriente*) as an explicitly class-based rather than ethnically-based organisation, which was aligned with, and supported financially and organisationally by the *Federación Nacional de Organizacíones Clasistas* (FENOC) and *Central Ecuatoriana de Organizacíones Clasistas* (CEDOC), two national class-based organisations.

development in order to integrate the Amazonian region with the rest of the nation economically and socially.

Second, FICSH shifted its focus during the 1980s from one centred on land claims to one based on strengthening territorial rights by linking territory to cultural identity. Shuar claims and discourse evolved here within the context of rapidly changing national politics and ongoing international debates.[3] These wider changes led to changes within FICSH's orientation as the federation responded to the new political opportunities. In particular, the emphasis on territorial rights increased during the decade, especially in the aftermath of bitter land disputes involving oil companies and the Quichua people in Napo and Pastaza (see Figure 4.2.1). Following these events, FICSH was better able to see the nature of the approaching threat and thus hastily began the process of defining Shuar territories. In this regard, Pablo Tsere (2004), a former President of FICSH, stated that "before the indigenous people of the Amazonian region did not have to organise themselves like today. Now with the new threats by the oil companies and state development plans we have to develop new strategies to defend our ancestral lands". This statement is important since it demonstrates how Shuar leaders felt it necessary to organise the communities into a federation in order to defend their land against multiple threats. The idea of 'indigenous territory' thus emerged--an idea associated with a significant political shift on the part of indigenous federations throughout Ecuador (see Chapter 6).

Third, in the 1990s, FICSH (as well as by then the newly-created FIPSE) increasingly elaborated calls for the recognition of a distinctive Shuar cultural identity based on territorial and political rights. Through collective language bringing together ancestral territory, cultural identity and the goal of self-determination, Shuar leaders from both of these federations asserted a political and historical entitlement to ancestral territory even as they articulated their claims within a discursive frame of national and

---

[3] As noted in Chapter 4, some changes had taken place regarding the protection of indigenous rights. Pressure from national indigenous organisations, such as CONAIE and CONFENIAE on the Ecuadorian government had important impacts on policy and laws to better represent the interests of Ecuador's indigenous people. National organizing improved the legal position of indigenous people, especially with collective rights guaranteed under the National Constitution of 1998 and the International Labor Organization's Declaration 169 (the Convention Concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries).

international indigenous rights.[4] As with popular actions throughout Latin America, Shuar people sought "the social recognition of their existence and a political space of expression" (Alvarez et al. 1992:4). They emphasised the right to self-determination in articulating their demands as well as the freedom to determine their own autonomous political status and their own economic, social and cultural development. As Tito Puanchir (2004), a former President of FIPSE, emphasised "We created our federation to defend our territory and cultural identity against the oil companies and the colonists". Similarly, Rafael Pandam (2002), another former FIPSE leader, stated,

> "From the time our organisation started, it took the decision to not allow oil companies on our lands. We had already seen what our indigenous brothers in the north of Ecuador had experienced from oil development--a series of irreparable social, cultural and environmental impacts. In my opinion, if the Shuar had given the go-ahead to these companies, they would have acted the same as oil companies have in other parts of the region, dividing the communities and their representative organizations, destroying the environment and threatening our cultural identity".

These statements are important since they demonstrate how Shuar leaders reacted to planned local oil development deeming it necessary to organise new political and legal strategies to protect Shuar cultural identity and territory. As the discourse and focus of the struggle shifted, so too did the organisational practices of the Shuar federations. The perceived intensification of the oil development threat was ultimately behind FICSH's and FIPSE's increasingly complex activism. Their strategies have been geared towards strengthening their own organisational capacity as well as emphasising the inter-connectedness of territory, development, traditional production practices and cultural identity. To gain a better understanding of the processes here, the discussion will now turn to the organisational strategies of FIPSE in particular--a federation whose efforts served between 1998 and 2000 formed the basis of one of the most successful indigenous mobilisations of the decade in Ecuador.[5]

One specific mobilisation was especially central to FIPSE's work at this time. Thus, in August 1999 the leadership of FIPSE organised a protest march in Macas designed to

---

[4] Sawyer (2004) examines how the Quichua, Achuar and Shiwiar people organised a protest march at this time to call for communal titling of territory in Pastaza and to demand new reforms in the constitution, such that Ecuador could be declared a 'plurinational' state.

[5] FICSH was at that time also organising politically against the oil industry. However, FIPSE had since the late 1990s assumed a leading role in the struggle against oil development.

stop the US-based oil company ARCO Oriente from operating in Shuar territory. Some 400 Shuar people marched from communities scattered across the rainforests of the southern *Oriente* to the nearest major town Macas, despite this involving a trek of many days (see Figure 4.5), to deliver the message that their culture, land and beliefs were 'not for sale'. The sheer novelty of this action merits attention. Never before had so many members of the Shuar people congregated in one place to take political action. Further, the commitment of the protestors can be seen in the time away from their work as well as the effort involved in getting to the demonstration. The protestors marched to the Supreme Court office located in Macas to present a legal injunction against ARCO Oriente designed to prevent further rights violations by the oil company and to demand that the government enforce Shuar rights (see Figure 5.1).

Figure 5.1 Shuar mobilise against ARCO Oriente

Source: www.amazonwatch.org

Figure 5.1 documents this crucial demonstration of August 1999. The sense of struggle captured in this photo is important in that it reflects how issues of political and cultural identity had become thoroughly intertwined by the late 1990s. Two things are especially important here. The first thing to note about this protest march and legal campaign is that it demonstrates organising ability on the part of the Shuar in general and FIPSE in particular. Community mobilisation had already begun in the area in late 1998 when the ARCO Oriente surveyed oil block 24 prior to starting exploration. Yet,

this area was claimed by the Shuar based on long-term residency. Convinced that the oil company would destroy the Shuar environment, culture and livelihoods, the leadership of FIPSE galvanised their communities into forming a coalition in order to stop it. A crucial first step occurred at a FIPSE-sponsored assembly in August 1998 at which it was agreed to prohibit oil development and all negotiations by Shuar individuals or communities with ARCO. Hence, as the President of FIPSE at that time, recalled, "We're carrying out the will of our people. Our people have said that we are going to resist against oil developments because ARCO has disrespected us by entering our territories, trying to divide and create problems among our communities. Therefore, we say no to oil development" (T. Puanchir 2002). Even allowing for the rhetorical tone here, it was indeed a crucial goal of that company to undermine, divide and generally cause problems for indigenous communities and their representative organisations as had already happened in the Napo, Sucumbios, and Orellanos provinces (see Figure 4.2.1) (CDES 2002c; Wray 2000). As ARCO's operations moved south, Shuar communities deliberated as how best to prevent similar negative impacts on their lands. FIPSE had learned about the strategies used by the oil companies from relatives living in the north and even from some local Shuar residents who had worked for the oil companies before (M. Tibi 2002).

FIPSE played a pivotal role in boosting the organisation of individual communities notably by underscoring the gravity of the threat and the 'sneaky' strategies used by oil companies to infiltrate the area. Thus, it claimed that such strategies involved breaking community unity, corrupting local leaders, forming independent organisations in favour of oil exploitation, and providing monetary and development enticements. Gifts of money, medical supplies, school materials, as well as the construction of community houses with solar panels, divided bewildered communities even as they established a relationship of dependence between them and ARCO. As one Shuar leader bitterly noted, "We don't want the oil companies. They offered us electric light and energy, they offered us a health centre and large sums of money, and this is how those communities became dependent on the oil companies" (R. Uwi 2002).

In this way, the August 1999 protest march thus was built upon a series of meetings that, in aggregate, demonstrated organisational ability based on community-based

mobilisation against the oil industry. The importance of this strategy was made readily clear to me in an interview I had with Tito Puanchir, in Macas in July 2002.

> "As a president, I had to strengthen the organisational approaches of the federation and unite our communities to be able to defend our cultural identity and collective territory. We are demanding that our collective identity, territory and the right to develop our communities in a sustainable manner be respected. There was a path of division and separation that greatly worried us. They are trying to divide us in order to gain access to our territory; if they continue to push there will be a confrontation, which will only endanger our communities, livelihoods and identity"(T. Puanchir 2002).

This statement underscores that a key factor in the decision to march was the felt need to build political and cultural consensus and unity among FIPSE-linked communities in order to reverse divisions encouraged by ARCO.

The second thing to note about the protest march featured in Figure 5.1 is the importance of the explicit and confrontational political discourses that it articulated. Thus, the placards and the chants the protestors utilised in that march show how these are key discursive points of struggle. Thus, while some travelled by plane and by bus, the vast majority travelled on foot. Carrying spears and enough *chicha* (a traditional fermented drink) for everyone, they held signs that read, "Oil companies- ghosts of death" and chanted "No more Texaco". The protestors referred to how Texaco had exploited sizable oil reserves in the northern *Oriente*, inscribing the landscape with oil wells and infrastructure essential for oil exploration and production. The firm had contaminated the surface and subterranean water and soil systems and its practices had posed serious problems for local indigenous communities (see Accíon Ecologíca 2000; Kimerling 1992; Wray 2000). In fact, FIPSE was created partly to better confront increasing oil development in Shuar territory and this protest march was the culmination of Shuar struggles provoked by the federation to oppose the oil companies.

The Shuar protestors claimed that, since ARCO had bought the concession in 1998 the company had violated numerous rights guaranteed under both international law and the Ecuadorian constitution. Indeed, when defining the planned oil development for the region, neither the state minister responsible for oil concessions nor ARCO thought to make contract with FIPSE to "discuss the extent of the project" even though they were obliged to do so by law (FIPSE 1998a: 6). Even worse, ARCO had by-passed FIPSE

altogether when it supported Shuar 'phantom organisations' in the newly designated block 24, notably *Organización Shuar del Ecuador* (OSHE) and *Asociación Indígena de Evangélicos de Pastaza de la Región Amazónica* (AIEPRA). Leaders both within and outside FIPSE's organisational structure repeatedly condemned this divide-and-rule tactic. Thus, former FIPSE leader Rafael Pandam (2002) complained how "OSHE receive funds directly from the oil company. Their riches make them selfish and opportunistic. They do not really care what is happening in the communities. They do what they choose. The leaders of OSHE say that they are owners of the oil. But in reality they are corrupt".

ARCO, for its part, clearly rejected these allegations. Thus, in an interview with the Ecuadorian newspaper *Expreso de Guayaquil*, dated 25 July 1999, Herb Vickers, ARCO's official representative in Ecuador, justified their practices by stating that they needed to work more on the local level since "the large indigenous organisations no longer represent the people. The large organisations are political machines". Vickers also denied that corporate strategies both facilitated and benefited from dividing indigenous loyalties and political structures. To ensure that its exploratory operations would proceed successfully, ARCO needed to appease local Shuar people through an assortment of development projects. In return, the ARCO-sponsored organisations had to promise never to impede ARCO's oil operations. As stated in the standard agreement, the organisations were the "only local representative body that could enter into a legal contract with ARCO".[6]

At the same time, the leaders that ARCO approached claimed that they were the 'true' representatives of the Shuar people. This stance can be seen in a document, *Reproducción Escaneada*, written by Shuar leaders, and sponsored by the oil companies. It states: "The large Shuar organisations [FIPSE and FICSH] do not represent the communities, their leaders are corrupted and have mismanaged the economic resources that were meant to help the base communities".[7] Similarly, Alfredo Pitiur, President of OSHE (2004), declared that, "FIPSE and FICSH leaders have not

---

[6] Convenio de Cooperación, 25th February 1999, reprinted in CDES (1999).

[7] The document was signed on 27th October 2000 in Puyo, by Jacinto Carinkia, Vice-president AIEPRA, Alfonso Chango, Vice-president FENAKIPA, Angel Shakay, AIEPRA, Hector Mayancha, President ASODIRA, Antonio Moncayo, President FENASH, Galo Saant, President Taisha Association, Matrin Chamic, President Arutam, and Manuel Maich, Arutam.

visited our communities in more than three years. What have we gained from the Shuar federations? With the help of OSHE and by working with the oil company we will develop and progress economically". In particular, the so-called 'phantom organisations' exemplified the shifting terrain of struggle over oil development in Morona Santiago. It showed how people were reshaping their identities and allegiances, realigning local culturally based understandings of territory and natural resources use in different ways, thereby provoking debate over who controlled what. Above all, the struggle was over who was to define 'Shuar' identity.

FIPSE had no choice but to confront the material and discursive strategies of ARCO and its allies in the strongest possible terms. Hence, the tone and the message of Shuar protestors that can be seen in Figure 5.1 as well as the promotion by FIPSE leaders, such as Tito Puanchir and Rafael Pandam, of the need for a legal injunction. Implicit to this latter demand was a specific and political notion of cultural identity. FIPSE organised a campaign starting in August 1999 to seek a legal injunction against ARCO based on provisions in the International Labour Organisation Convention 169 and the 1998 National Constitution (see Chapter 4). Of particular interest here is the way this campaign inter-linked the political and the cultural. Thus, the proposed injunction claimed that both Shuar cultural identity and collective territorial rights were simultaneously being violated as a result of oil development.[8]

This claim had three elements (FIPSE 1998b). Firstly, the injunction demanded the right of the Shuar people to defend their cultural and political identity and territory, and the right be consulted on and to participate in activities involving development within their territory. As stated in the injunction: "Our collective rights are clearly established in Articles 83 and 84 of the 1998 National Constitution as well as in international accords and conventions. They are written and already ratified. ARCO's negotiations were a clear violation of these laws".[9] Secondly, the injunction would prevent ARCO from henceforth entering Shuar territory or approaching Shuar communities without the prior consent of FIPSE. Specifically, "ARCO [would] be required to negotiate only

---

[8] As noted, FIPSE's legal strategies were supported by the Shuar federation FICSH. However, it was FIPSE which organised the protest march and subsequent legal actions against ARCO Oriente, hence the specific focus here on this Shuar federation.

[9] See Chapter 4 for details on the National Constitution and the ILO Convention 169. Here, the focus is on the concrete implications that it has had for the organising processes for defending the cultural and political identity and territory of the Shuar in Morona Santiago.

with FIPSE and its legal representatives, thereby prohibiting them from meeting with local organisations without FIPSE's approval, and [from] engaging in illegal negotiations with individual communities". Thirdly, it criticised the disregard shown by ARCO and its allies for the authority of FIPSE, which was legally bound to represent the Shuar communities in Morona Santiago, and it stated that ARCO had used divide-and-rule strategies to divide the Shuar people.

The material and symbolic importance of this legal strategy cannot be over-emphasised. Symbolically, it is significant because it was the first case in Ecuador where an indigenous group used constitutional mechanisms against an oil company (or any corporation for that matter). Indeed, the court case represents one of the first legal interpretations of the collective rights of indigenous people under Ecuador's new constitution and recently ratified international treaties. By the end of the legal process, in April 2000 and after almost two years of actions, the Constitutional Tribunal upheld the injunction in favour of FIPSE.[10] First, the civil court judge, Mauricio Larriva, ruled that ARCO had violated the constitutional rights of Shuar residents as well as infringing on those rights contained in the National Constitution and the ILO 169 Convention. Second, the judge prohibited ARCO from entering Shuar territory or negotiating directly with, or communicating with individuals or communities inside the federation's territory without authorisation from FIPSE. Thirdly, the judge stated that ARCO's behaviour had violated the "disciplinary order that governs and must govern the relationship between FIPSE and its associates, which has generated discord". This last statement referred to how ARCO had approached selected communities for endorsement thereby disrupting the integrity and right of the federation to represent local indigenous interests.

The material impact of this key ruling was equally important as part of the overall Shuar political mobilisation since ARCO could not initiate oil exploitation as it had planned. After the court case, ARCO sold off the concession for block 24 to the US-based oil company Burlington Resources, in April 2000. In November of the same year, following a FIPSE deposition that Burlington had adopted similar divide-and-rule strategies to these used by ARCO, a civil court judge ordered that Burlington Resources

---

[10] This paragraph is based on the following source: Resolucíon No.247-RA-00-I.S del Tribunal Constitucional (FIPSE 1999)

had to comply with the ARCO injunction.[11] Burlington was required to consult with local populations as a condition of its concession contract it acquired from ARCO, but FIPSE refused to participate in such consultations and thereby prevented the company from moving ahead with exploration plans (see also Chapter 7).

Beyond this immediate effect, the injunction was crucial to the broader political challenge to state policies based on a quest to open up a space for indigenous cultural identity in the national political process and imagination. "We believe that to use legal and political measures, such as the case of the legal injunction, we will be able to defend our territories and identities as indigenous people. We cannot sell our culture, lives and our territory, it would destroy our cultures, livelihoods and identity" (T. Puanchir 2002). Indeed, the successful legal action taken by FIPSE between 1998 and 2000 set the stage for subsequent indigenous protests within Ecuador (CDES 2002c; Wray 2000). The court decision thus marked an important precedent in the defence of the cultural identity and collective territorial rights of indigenous people in Ecuador as a whole.

Yet, to appreciate why the legal Shuar federations responded as they did, it is important to understand how oil company strategies under neoliberal policies have fundamentally shifted the terms of national debate around the issues of cultural identity, rights and representation-- in the process transforming Shuar lives. To understand this point we need to assess how the concept of cultural identity itself has come to be understood in contemporary Ecuador, notably involving recognition of the collective rights of indigenous people. As such, we now consider in more detail Shuar political mobilisation as a cultural process. Crucial here is the way that the Shuar federations have incorporated concepts of cultural identity into strategies to confront what they see as culturally inappropriate state and oil company development policies.

---

[11] Notification by the Judge in Macas to Burlington Resources Ltd, the 14th November 2000 (CDES 2002d).

5.2 Shuar Cultural Identity

The integration of the *Oriente* into national political cultures and the wider market economy has brought many changes to Shuar livelihoods as well as to their sense of identity. This is particularly the case for those involved with the Shuar federations, whose strategies have incorporated both 'modernising' approaches to political organising and 'alternative' development designed to promote forms of social change deemed most likely to reinforce Shuar culture and identity. Thus, with integration into a national political process and a new set of relationships with the state and other external actors comes the idea that indigenous people are not just defined as being indigenous but may also be understood as national citizens with full civil rights. The Shuar movement has therefore been faced with two big challenges. On the one hand, it has needed to reflect the multiple identities of those it represents, and to negotiate on their behalf a new relationship with the state and other external actors more reflective of the distinctive identity of the Shuar. On the other hand, the movement has sought to make claims upon powerful outsiders, especially the state, as fully-fledged national citizens with the associated right to make demands on centrally controlled resources.

Yet, these challenges have raised difficult questions about what it means to be 'indigenous' and 'Shuar' for both Shuar leaders and Shuar villagers, let alone how they ought to strategically articulate culture and identity. For the purposes of this thesis, it is not necessary to unpack every detail of culture as grasped by either Shuar leaders or villagers since the aim of this thesis is to address only the key cultural articulations made by the Shuar which have had an impact on political organising vis-à-vis state agencies and oil companies.

Above all, it is important to note that Shuar leaders often reveal a discontinuity with community residents in the way they articulate and use cultural ideas-- which illustrate in turn other differences between them and the communities they claim to represent. On the one hand, Shuar leaders have politicised culture through abstract articulations of the Shuar as 'defenders of the Amazon rainforest' and as proponents of 'sustainable development'--a style more in tune with outside audiences than with villagers. With integration into national political processes has thus come the need to fashion

specifically indigenous agendas that simultaneously respond to dominant national and international cultural politics while strengthening indigenous cultural identity and politics. However, and on the other hand, Shuar community residents conceptualisations of cultural identity usually differ markedly from such abstractions. This difference has had important implications for the articulation and resonance of Shuar cultural identity even as the integration of Shuar lands into the wider market economy has also brought other lifestyle related cultural changes to the Shuar.

For Shuar leaders, economic and cultural integration into the wider world may be inevitable, but must not be at the expense of cherished aspects of Shuar culture. It is for this reason they promote "incorporation of indigenous politics for the affirmation of cultural identity" and an autonomous organising strategy for the "achievement of cultural and territorial rights and the defence of natural resources and the environment" (P. Tsere 2004). This statement neatly demonstrates for our purposes key issues of the identity question, namely: 1) cultural identity is noted as the organising axis of political practice; 2) the right to a sanctioned territory that is perceived as a necessary pre-condition for the development of an indigenous cultural vision; and 3) the right to construct an autonomous perspective for the future, particularly an autonomous vision of development based on Shuar culture. Territory and place-based cultural practices will be examined in detail in Chapter 6. Here, the task is to assess how the Shuar federations have politicised cultural identity, notably by incorporating the concept of ethnic nationality into their campaigns.

Assertion of the cultural identity of the Shuar people has been one the key ways that the Shuar federations have sought to halt state-sanctioned oil development. Much of the strategic innovation shown by the federations in the late 1990s reflected a keen wish to combat the divisive tactics of the oil companies. According to Rafael Pandam (2002) of FIPSE, these tactics "pose an immediate risk to the integrity of the organisation, and to the integrity of each indigenous person", even as they "pose severe direct threats to the cultural identity of the Shuar people". As noted, ARCO had used illegal means to enter FIPSE territory, without first acquiring authorisation from its leaders. As such, Shuar leaders argued that the oil company had "disrespected the collective rights of the Shuar people, and engaged in strategies to divide and confuse the communities, which is a violation of our rights for cultural identity" (T. Puanchir 2002).

Thus, the Shuar federations' new political vision was founded on attempts to defend a local cultural identity. The goal here was to strategically politicise identity and cultural difference while increasingly adopting legal measures to defend that identity and linked collective territorial rights. Political action laid the groundwork for collective indigenous consciousness of cultural identity that entailed simultaneously symbolic, material and physical struggles. Far from being an impulsive and 'natural' event emerging from indigenous communities rooted in 'primordial' attachments to land, the reaction led by the Shuar federations was a highly organised political response based on fine-tuned strategic calculation.

Indeed, by reconstructing cultural identity politically, identity and cultural difference became identified as organising axis of both daily life *and* political practice. On the one hand, cultural identity for the Shuar is based on daily community production and consumption practices, and it is these practices that are most commonly identified by community members as being characteristically 'Shuar' (see below). On the other hand, cultural identity has become the tool to build the political strategies of the Shuar federations that seek to voice Shuar political, economic, and cultural demands that are typically critical of state development projects as well as associated understandings of nation and democracy. Shuar leaders thus began constructing discourses about local indigenous identities according to the contested political environments within which they were situated.[12] The advent of intensified cultural and political identification gave rise, in turn, to novel forms of political participation. This can be seen in the court case and legal injunction that were initiated as a result of FIPSE-led community mobilisation. While we saw above how the court case concerned the violation of the rights of specific communities, it is important to note here the broader implications of such a strategy for FIPSE and FICSH to collectively defend territorial rights by asserting Shuar cultural identity.

---

[12] Similarly, Garfield (2001) shows how Brazil's Xavante people adapted to the physical intrusion of the state and non-indigenous settlers and how they mobilised their identity and culture politically to contest the nation- and state-building projects of the modern Brazilian state. Here, indigenous leaders consciously mixed images of the *Indian* with the national 'myth' of racial democracy and patriotic rhetoric in order to simultaneously demand rights as Brazilian citizens *and* as indigenous people.

The Shuar federations' image as indigenous organisations representing the region's 'Indian' population and promoting the region's 'traditional' cultural traditions was fundamental to the federations' ability to use legal measures and to attract political support and funds. As organising became increasingly politically complex, involving simultaneously local, national and international engagement in search of political and economic support, some Shuar leaders utilised more self-conscious and strategic forms of identity discourse. During the 1980s and the 1990s when national and international NGOs became interested in the combined plight of indigenous people and tropical rainforests, indigenous federations saw an opportunity to access new funding opportunities by emphasising their 'ecologically-friendly' and 'Indian' credentials (see Figure 5.2)

Figure 5.2 Shuar leaders in the Amazon

Source: www.pachamama.org

Figure 5.2 neatly illustrates this process. It shows two Shuar leaders dressed up in their traditional clothes and tribal decorations apparently in their own territory. The photo clearly plays on Western notion of ecologically 'wise' indigenous people going back to the idea of the 'noble savage' (see also Bebbington 2001). At the same time, there is the tropical rainforest in the background, a vital green world of vegetation and 'biodiversity'. This type of image resonates well with Western concerns of environmental destruction and tropical conservation. Whether addressing media, state

officials, international NGOs or even other indigenous leaders, the declarations of Shuar leaders were embedded with images of 'crusaders' of the rainforest, the last patch of tropical 'Eden' left on this earth, and "the lungs of the world" (M. Tsamariant 2002). Phrases such as these rolled easily off the Shuar leaders' tongues in a manner comparable to other indigenous people's pronouncements elsewhere in the tropics (see Slater 2003). For example Manuel Tibi, a Shuar shaman, opined, "For centuries we have defended the rainforest. We defend the last remaining frontier of uncontaminated forest remaining in Ecuador. We live and defend large parts of the Amazon region, the lungs of the world and patrimony of all living species on the planet" (M. Tibi 2004). Similarly, Adolfo Shakay of CONFENAIE self-consciously mixed ecological ideas with Shuar cultural identity by linking that identity to sustainable use of the rainforest: "Ancestral forest practices have shaped the ecology of the local forest as surely as the cultural identity of those who lived there" (A. Shakay 2004). Eco-defence is thus seen to be part-and-parcel of the Shuar's cultural identity and ancestral status in the *Oriente*.

Thus, these remarks, which were typical of those made to me by Shuar leaders during fieldwork, are revealing on two counts: 1) They suggest that the Shuar are culturally disposed to being natural defenders of an increasingly scarce resource; and 2) They suggest that the cultural-ecological role of the Shuar is now of global interest since forests in Shuar lands are the 'lungs of the world'. Environmental concerns of this kind of Western idiom have thus clearly played an important role in shaping the activities and representations of the Shuar federations. However, this has also informed wider Shuar articulations of cultural identity adding further impacts to the campaign to achieve local autonomy.

Though Shuar leaders have keyed into Western concerns for tropical conservation for their own purposes, they have nonetheless condemned aspects of that Western agenda where it does not square with the ancestral domain effort. For instance, Shuar leaders explicitly claimed that an integral component of indigenous identity was the 'sustainable' *use* of the tropical rainforest: theirs was not therefore a pristine wilderness or 'untouched' forest. Luis Kuash (2003) reacted especially strongly against portrayals of indigenous people as 'noble savages' during our discussions. According to Luis, the rainforest was "an integrally managed and diversified space, not some place to be preserved for conservationist purposes". Ironically, the language of tropical

conservation both helped (financially and politically) to sustain Shuar struggles even as it laid the groundwork for state and corporate attempts to manipulate ecological concerns so that they could champion their activities in the name of the environment (see Chapter 7).

Another crucial aspect of Shuar organisational strategies linked to the elaboration of a politics of cultural identity has been the fact that discussions of identity have largely been framed in terms of membership of an ethnic nationality defined in territorial terms. This has been associated with a significant discursive and political shift on the part of Shuar organisations whereby FIPSE and FICSH adopted a discourse of ethnic nationality based on territorial and political rights in the late 1990s. Increasingly, the Shuar federations adopted much of the discourse promoted by CONAIE calling for the recognition of ethnic nationalities based on the idea of a plurinational and multicultural state. As noted in Chapter 4, CONIAE addressed ethnic and cultural issues through an even greater integration into national politics acting on behalf of all indigenous groups of Ecuador, including the Shuar. Although dating from the 1980s, the concept of ethnic nationality has been especially salient after the creation of the indigenous party *Pachakutik* in 1996, and its subsequent consolidation as a political actor at the turn of the millennium (Lucas 2001).

One of the most important outcomes of the strategies of this political party has undoubtedly been the recognition of Ecuador as a plurinational and multicultural state, while also acknowledging Ecuador's indigenous groups as nationalities with distinct cultural, territorial and political rights. As stated by Luis Macas (2001:4) founder and a former President of CONIAE: "The ethnic element and the demand for Ecuador to become a plurinational country were, in principle, the factors that unified the different ethnic groups of CONIAE". Further, Lluco (2001:9), another former CONAIE leader, observed that "the plurinational state is a single state with juridical territories inhabited by indigenous nations, and their rights to decide for themselves politically, economically, culturally and socially…the national territory is not dismembered but our people are accorded further levels of decision-making and autonomy".

As a response to the recognition of ethnic nationalities at regional and national levels, Shuar leaders shifted their own discourse and politics towards promoting ethnic nationalities and territories in order to capitalise on national changes. This type of argument was visible for example at a meeting convened in Santiago (situated in the far south of Morona Santiago province; see Figure 4.5) in October 2003 where Shuar leaders discussed how to develop a Shuar 'nation'. Here, Pablo Tsere, FICSH President at that time and who has been the most outspoken leader for creating a Shuar nation, captured the essence of this new line of thinking when he stated, "Nationality is the product of cultural processes within our communities that involve a collective sense of belonging to a people". This statement, which was typical of those made by other Shuar leaders at the time, demonstrates, firstly, that the Shuar federations questioned the conventional framing of the nation-state thereby inspiring debate on who constitutes the nation and who has the power to control resources and land; and secondly that the Shuar federations identified themselves as being members of an ethnic nationality and wished to be seen as such. In the process, FICSH's and FIPSE's discourse has challenged that of the state, which has long downplayed cultural difference in favour of a uniform Ecuadorian identity ruled from the centre (Sawyer 2004; Yashar 1998).

Indeed, meetings such as the October 2003 Santiago meeting revealed how FIPSE and FICSH had come to question the very notion of the nation-state and associated appeals to 'national unity' and the 'national interest'. Indeed, the Shuar leader's response was to reject this 'national myth'. Francisco Sandu (2002), another FIPSE leader, reacted especially strongly to this when he declared: "We maintain that the Ecuadorian nation is incomplete and does not represent all people within national society, such as the Shuar people". He added, "In part, the aim of our federation has been the incorporation and inclusion of ethnic, cultural and political concerns within existing nation-state structures [in order] to bring into question the very concepts and constructions of the state, citizenship and nation". Thus, most Shuar leaders I interviewed, such as Pablo Tsere and Francisco Sandu, demanded legislation that would provide for autonomous control of a Shuar ancestral territory and that this territory should be granted to the Shuar *pueblo* (people) as a nationality. The meshing of territory and ethnic nationality will be further examined in Chapter 6. Here, it is important to note that these sorts of statements demonstrated how Shuar leaders have sought to construct cultural identity in keeping with the idea of ethnic nationalities promoted by CONAIE and *Pachakutik*

nationally and internationally, but grounding that idea firmly in terms of Shuar ancestral territory.

Thus, the Shuar federations have utilised discourses of cultural identity in strategic ways in order to influence political agendas, access financial or institutional resources, and obtain territorial and resource rights. Their discursive mobilisation of cultural identity, which we have examined so far in this chapter, is no exception. However, it is vital to note the symbolic and material distance between Shuar leaders who have politicised cultural identity and articulated it through political discourses at the regional, national and international scales and the Shuar residents of local communities who define cultural identity differently, notably by linking it to everyday practices and beliefs. This distance has had important implications for the articulation and resonance of Shuar cultural identity in general.

Often located in remote locations, Shuar community residents have had less engagement with national and international policies and actors and have also not been involved usually in campaigns and development projects to the same extent as the federations. These different roles, together with the fact that local communities only meet occasionally in large assembly meetings whereas federation leaders occupy permanent offices in Macas and Sucua, mean that in comparison to the federations, the Shuar communities play a minor role in producing discursive representations of their own identity for outside consumption. Whereas the Shuar federations write, speak and draw explicit connections between identity, territory and political organisation, the local communities rarely do so in this fashion.

To understand identity construction in the Shuar communities themselves, we must consider community households, and the way in which, for most people, self-identification and cultural identity is embedded within complex relations of everyday practices, beliefs, and traditional production and consumption systems. These strategies are mainly place-based and largely gendered. Ways of talking about these everyday practices are also strikingly different from the more politicised and rhetorical language used by the Shuar federations to describe cultural identity that was noted above. The most important markers of Shuar cultural identity at the local level thus are: 1) *Chakra* agriculture and the production and consumption of traditional foods, such as *chicha* and

huayusa; 2) the natural environment and the associated use of medicinal plants through shamanism; and 3) the nature of Shuar education as well as the use of the Shuar language.[13]

Firstly, community production and consumption practices play an important role in forming ideas of cultural identity, and it is these daily practices that are most commonly identified by community members as being characteristically 'Shuar'. The importance of such practices was made clear to me when I undertook participatory fieldwork during ten months in various Shuar villagers as well as when I conducted in-depth interviews with Shuar residents. Far from merely being economic functions, these everyday practices are fundamental to the collective identity of the community and to the cultural expression of that identity. In particular, *chakra* agriculture and the production and consumption of traditional foods are important markers of cultural identity (see Figure 5.3)

Figure 5.3 A Shuar woman in the *chakra*

Source: this Author 2004

[13] To reiterate, this discussion of village-level Shuar cultural identity does not purport to be extensive but focuses on those aspects of particular saliency to the concerns of this thesis.

Figure 5.3 usefully demonstrates a number of these issues and it shows how Shuar women in particular are involved in the everyday practices of *chakra* agriculture, which is *one* important measure of cultural identity. It is in the *chakra* that Shuar women plant small plots of traditional foods, such as *kamote*, *plátano*, *papachina*, and *juca*, using shifting cultivation techniques that allow forest regeneration between cycles. The value of the *chakra* and these foods became apparent to me in one of the conversations I had with Maria Martinez (2003), a Shuar woman living in the village of Naparuk in Morona Santiago (see Figure 4.5). One night when we sat in her house preparing *chicha*, Maria explained, "The most important aspect of Shuar culture and identity is drinking *chicha* and *huayusa*, and the use of the *chakra*". When I asked her why this was so important, she responded that, "it is so important since we have learnt from our grandparents that we must not forget out traditions and customs, such as the teaching of how to drink *chicha* and *huayusa* and the Shuar language. Because if we lose them, we would not identify ourselves as Shuar" (M. Martinez 2003).

In this way, then, the drinking of *chicha* (a traditional fermented drink made of *juca*) and *huayusa* (a tea that the Shuar drink traditionally in the morning), together with the complex practices that bring them into Shuar life, are seen to be important signifiers of Shuar identity. Indeed, these production and consumption systems define patterns of life and sets of values that differentiate Shuar individuals who engage in these practices from the *mestizos* and whites with which they come into contact in nearby towns. In this way, traditional food becomes symbolic and its production and consumption informs Shuar identity even as it is integral to the reproduction of Shuar culture (Hendricks 1996).

Secondly, local community perceptions of cultural identity have also been linked to the 'natural' environment: to spirits, myths, and natural gods. Indeed, Shuar mythology, shamanism and the natural environment have important symbolic value and are important interlinked signifiers for Shuar cultural identity (Harner 1972; Salazar 1977). Indeed, many people still believe that Shuar cultural identity is represented by traditional Shuar gods, such as *Etsa* (the sun), *Nantu* (the moon), while cultivated lands are where *Nunkui* (the goddess of agriculture) is present. The natural environment, moreover, contains natural powers that determine life and death, which can be seen by consuming hallucinogenic plants, such as *Ayahuasca* (a hallucinogenic plant taken in

the ceremonies), which habitually occurs next to sacred waterfalls allowing the Shuar to communicate directly with *Arutam*, the protecting god of the rainforest. Different celebrations throughout the year- for example the New Year (*uwi*) when the fruits of the *chonta* palm ripen- also represent and reinforce Shuar cultural identity linked to the natural environment. Further, shamans (*Uwishint'*) have long been dominant among the Shuar, even though the shamans do not possess the same socio-political powers as before (Harner 1972; Karsten 1923, 1926).

This affinity to the natural environment based notably on shamanism is also a culturally-loaded marker to distinguish the Shuar from others. Indeed, Shuar residents are well aware of how they differ from other people, including other indigenous people as well as *mestizos* and *gringos* (westerners). Perceived differences as to who the Shuar are as well as how Shuar identity may be expressed vary according to audience. Thus, for example, the Shuar are still familiar to the general Ecuadorian public as the *tsantsa* head-shrinkers, while being described in Western ethnographic terms as hunters and gatherers, even as they perceive themselves as "people of shamans and self-assertive vision-seekers, though a rather conflict-prone people" (Perruchon 2003:114). Just as Shuar links to the land are complex, so too are the ways in which they understand their cultural 'place' in the world--as well as how outsiders place them culturally.

Thirdly, the Shuar sense of identity has also been directly influenced by the beliefs and practices of outsiders with whom they have been in contact. The group that has had the most impact here is the Salesian (Catholic) and Evangelic missionaries. Through an agreement with the Ecuadorian state in 1955, the Salesian missionaries had the sole responsibility to develop health care services, schools and infrastructure in the region until the end of 1970s. As noted in Chapter 4, they established missionary stations in Shuar lands and small settlements nearby these centres where they provided education and religious services. Salazar (1977) mentions two strategies that enhanced the impact of the Salesian mission among the Shuar. The first was the separation of the Shuar children from their families to attend missionary schools, and the second was the concentration of the Shuar in *centros*. The latter was discussed in Chapter 4. Here we will focus on how the missionary schools contributed to a change in Shuar cultural identity.

The Salesians built boarding schools to evangelise, educate, and 'civilise' Shuar children that required children to be separated from their parents and home environment. The removal of the children from the work force had a serious impact though not only on subsistence production, but most of all on the transmission of traditional knowledge and cultural values from parents to children. For example, it is while working in the *chakra* that the major part of female knowledge, both technical and symbolical, is transmitted from mother to daughter. One day when I worked with Hilda Mukucham in the *chakra* in the Mukucham village, she said that "we [the women] have been given the control and knowledge over the *chakra* and most of its products by *Nunkui* [the earth spirit] and this knowledge has passed down from mother to daughters for generations" (H. Mukucham 2004). This quote illustrates why men cannot tend and harvest the crops--it was the women who made a pact with *Nunkui* and it was the women *Nunkui* (through her daughter) gave fertile power to make the plants and the game grow and reproduce (see Perrechon 2003). This knowledge is thus lost when the children are separated from their parents and placed in missionary schools.

Thus, the *centros* and boarding schools became major centres of acculturation. Indeed, the Salesians aimed to make the Shuar Christian and to change thereby the religious world-view of the Shuar by creating a new 'regime of truth' (Foucault 1980) concerning what it meant to be Shuar. To the extent that being Catholic and attending mass was henceforth identified as quintessentially Shuar, 'traditional' signifiers such as the sacred waterfalls, *tsantsa*, the use of *Ayahuasca* for the practice of rituals and the drinking of *chicha* were regarded as outmoded and even non-Shuar. The Salesians thus regarded themselves as being entitled to decide who is a Shuar and what Shuar cultural identity meant. Luis Chumpi (2004) from Mukucham village recalled missionary schooling: "What many youngsters leaned in the missionary schools was that the Shuar formerly lived in misery because we were lacking essential knowledge about virtually everything, such as clothing, work, proper behaviour, and of course religion".

While seeking to eliminate pagan signifiers of Shuar identity, the Salesians nonetheless assisted the Shuar in the creation of the first Shuar federation, *Federación de Centros Shuar*, and educated individuals who became dominant in that organisation and its successor FICSH (see Chapter 4). Furthermore, the Salesians published a series of

books, *Mundo Shuar*, written by missionaries and volunteers originally used for teaching in Shuar schools and colleges. These books covered a wide range of issues from hunting techniques, gender relations, myths, to culture and ethnohistory. Ironically, these works have helped Shuar youngsters to learn about 'traditional' customs and myths, thereby re-emphasising Shuar cultural identity, albeit unevenly and in ways not intended by the Salesians.

Recent efforts to re-assert Shuar cultural identity have thus inevitably been partly a matter of reversing prior acculturative practices of outsiders such as the missionaries. For example, an important aim of FICSH has been the promotion of Shuar education, notably through a series of radio schools oriented towards bilingual education that utilises both the Spanish and Shuar languages. Overall this initiative has supported the values of distinctive Shuar practices and language skills. These schools established standardisation in teaching, which, besides having the result that every child is taught the same subjects, also "allows Shuar children to transfer from one *centro* to another without noticeable detriment in terms of the child's progress" (Salazar 1977: 39; Perrechon 2003).

Indeed, the bilingual programme was organised by the federation as a way for the Shuar people to gain access to previously denied educational opportunities, as well as to promote cultural pride in and through Shuar language. This program run by FICSH has evolved into permanent bilingual schools in many Shuar *centros* today providing a new focus for the modern construction of Shuar cultural identity. Lauro Kuja (2004), a teacher in Ijinti, explains, "The bilingual educational program has enabled our children to learn about our cultural values and the meanings and practices of Shuar traditional life".

Not surprisingly, Shuar teachers are a high status group in Shuar society. With their knowledge of and capability in handling both Shuar and *mestizo* culture, they have become de facto community-level interpreters of the conflict between Shuar residents and the state-backed oil companies. If a teacher is so inclined, he, and they are usually he (see below), can easily become a leader of the *centro* where he is working and even obtain posts within the Shuar federations. All of the presidents of the federations and

the associations to date have been educated in mission schools and trained as teachers. For the Shuar, they represent an alternative way of acquiring knowledge and power, distinct from the traditional methods, and complete with knowledge gained of the wider political culture. This is the case of Bartomele Kuja, who has been a leader of the *centro* Shinkiatam, and is currently working as a President for *Asociación Taisha*: "As a teacher I had the opportunity to learn about the political situation in Ecuador and how the Government seeks to implement oil development projects in Shuar territory. I then understood how this would pose a threat to our culture, identity and territory". In short, the teachers play a key role in processes of cultural re-vitalisation that are vital to wider political mobilisation.

Yet, in 2004 there was only one woman, Rosa Shakay, occupying a post as a leader in FICSH. Perruchon (2003:150) argues that "the teachers who have obtained the leading posts in *Pachakutik* are invariably men, the technicians are men, and only 25 percent of the bilingual teachers...are women". The majority of the Shuar men are positive towards the participation of women in projects, but only if they (the men) can be sure of keeping control over family decisions (Barrera and Trujillo 1997). Ironically, parents often complained to me about their daughters' unwillingness to attend school because they preferred to marry instead. For example, Armando Chumpia (2003) from the village of Ijinti (see Figure 4.5), explained to me how "it is very important for my daughters to go to school in order to continue their education". This case points to the fact that there is no simple explanation for why girls do not have the same level of education as boys. Apparently, it is not always the parents who oblige the girls to marry, but the girls themselves who see no point in education since they are going to marry anyway. It is rather a structural problem in society which, on the one hand, does not usually offer advanced jobs to Shuar women (who are doubly stigmatised as women and as Shuar), and on the other hand, does not enable Shuar women (and most men) to continue studying at higher levels because of the high costs of school attendance.

The role of education in shaping Shuar cultural identity thus remains ambiguous. An optimistic view sees Shuar education as a modernising project in which the Shuar federations try to emulate the results of Western schools and where children can be easily moved from one settlement to another. Salazar (1977) sees the positive aspects as

predominant: the schools prevented the children from leaving their homes for an extended amount of time (as was the case with the missionary schools), they made education accessible for more Shuar children, and they represent an effort to protect Shuar cultural values, belief systems and language. And yet, fewer children were learning Shuar as the first language despite this system.

These school-based efforts need to be situated in the wider context of regional upheaval and change that has served to fragment any sense of a unified Shuar cultural identity. Consider, for example, those Shuar who have borne the brunt of development intrusions over the years. Thus, those who live close to large settlements or towns are often poor and surrounded by *mestizo* settlers from the highlands who earn a living from cattle ranching. The forest is cut down, wild animal populations are decimated, and fish supplies are depleted. The result is that here local Shuar lose 'traditional' links to the land and must instead scramble for work in nearby towns. Almost inevitably, the Shuar language and cultural values are changed here to a greater extent than in those communities more removed from such developments.

There is also the process whereby some Shuar are seemingly happy to go along with cultural assimilation. Many younger people (often educated by missionaries) do not challenge the outsider instigated changes in Shuar cultural values that transform what it means to be a Shuar. Many have welcomed the transformation of their culture under the influence of the missionaries and *mestizo* colonisation, in spite of what they have heard from their elders about the negative impacts of these processes on Shuar language and customs. For example, Paulo (a pseudonym, 2004), a young Shuar man who lives outside Puyo, stated that "I have been educated in Spanish speaking schools since they provide a better education than our own Shuar schools and with this education I am able to live and work in Puyo. I can now buy American-styled clothes, use the Internet and eat in restaurants".

Clearly, the sense of being a 'Shuar' has changed over the years. Yet, this does not necessarily mean that people have lost their Shuar identity in favour of a '*mestizo*' identity (Perruchon 2003). For example, cattle ranching is seen by many young Shuar as a 'traditional' cultural practice, in spite of it being introduced by missionaries and

state agencies (see Chapter 6). Through the colonists and the Salesians (who provided the Shuar with loans and other types of support for cattle ranching), some Shuar came to have a positive view of the missionaries, cattle ranching and outside development in general as they became reliant on outsiders as the main source of income. New economic opportunities are linked in complicated ways to shifting notions of being 'Shuar'.

In fact, most Shuar people have long been active in *both* embracing *and* resisting new cultural values. Despite changes in clothing and life-style, though, the Shuar do exist as a distinct cultural entity, not least according to themselves. There has never been an uncritical acceptance of all aspects of development, rather a strategic use of external resources, with some critical consequences. As stated by one Shuar villager: "Money and modern education, yes, are necessary in order to organise, travel, communicate, and unify our people. But we have everything we need to survive in the jungle. First we need to defend our territory, manage our natural resources well. We only need money and modern education for training and communication" (G. Sando 2004). The question of how to maintain cherished aspects of their culture and identity, while simultaneously obtaining some of the benefits of modern healthcare, education, communications, technology and market opportunities, remain a common concern among the Shuar people.

The question of how to respond to the advances of the oil companies and their impacts on Shuar cultural identity thus fits into a wider process of ongoing reflection about modern development and the role of the Shuar therein. For some, such as Luis Mukucham (2004), an elder from Mukucham in Pastaza (see Figure 4.5), the message was clear: "We, as the base communities, are the ones that have to do most of the work in the areas of culture, health, education and development. And we must also be careful of not becoming too dependent on foreigners and their development funding". Yet, for others, especially those already integrated with outsider-controlled development, the path ahead is less clear-cut. Thus, one Shuar man argued anonymously: "The federations [FICSH and FIPSE] receive funding from foreign organizations but the money never reaches the communities rather the leaders keep the money for themselves. We have now turned to the oil companies and they have promised to help us with monetary and development assistance".

As this last statement suggests, the practices of the oil companies have thus affected Shuar communities as some individuals and groups have decided to negotiate while others remained opposed to these firms. This has created strong tensions among the Shuar over cultural identity-- a topic to which we now turn.

5.3 Divisions among the Shuar

The elaboration of the Shuar federations has been one of the most significant socio-political processes in Shuar lands (FICSH was created in 1964 and FIPSE in 1990). Two other significant institutional changes simultaneously occurred: 1) increasingly assertive Salesian and Evangelical missions that engaged with Shuar people through development work, and 2) the growth of a non-governmental organisation (NGO) sector. Both of these actors have encouraged federations, albeit often for different reasons. What is important for our discussion here is how each of them fostered a discussion of the rights of indigenous people as being equal to those of other Ecuadorians and/or rights designed to protect a distinctive Shuar cultural identity-- generally, how these actors set in motion a process whereby federation and local community cultural views might diverge.

The elaboration of the Shuar federations has resulted in part from the significant support of these external actors. As noted, the Salesian mission helped with the establishment of the *Federación de Centros Shuar* in the area in order to counteract colonisation and land-grabbing. However, the Shuar federations have also increasingly received support from national and international NGOs, such as *Centro Derechos Económicos y Sociales* (CDES), CARE, SNV (Netherlands Development Organisation), and Pachamama. For example, Pachamama and SNV have provided technical and economical support in a joint initiative to the Shuar and Achuar federations in Morona Santiago designed to develop and coordinate strategies for the defence of both the Shuar and Achuar territory against the threat posed by Burlington Resources and the Ecuadorian state (H. Koster 2004). David Elliot (2004), who is working for Pachamama in Quito, stated that the organisation's primary roles are "to provide access to technical expertise and funding to support them [the Shuar and

Achuar] with the design and implementation of a variety of projects". The project aims include: 1) Developing sustainable economic enterprises based on the renewable resources of the land; 2) Capturing and recording traditional knowledge and supporting the empowerment and revitalization of traditional indigenous education and healing practices; 3) Strengthening the ability to defend indigenous lands against outside encroachment, including demarcation, mapping, and legal work to secure clear title to land; and 4) Supporting initiatives that strengthen their governing federation and its leadership.

Given the power of international NGOs in particular, the Shuar federations' agenda was soon influenced by the perceived concerns of these actors. We saw earlier how the Shuar played up their role as stewards of the environment (see Figure 5.2). There was a clear interest in funding opportunities here. Thus, some Shuar federation leaders soon realised that it would be easiest to receive funding if they chose to create projects and strategies that suited Western ideals and agendas and as communicated conveniently through workshops, conferences and small meetings held in offices in towns. Some of these strategies, however, were unrelated to the original ideas of the Shuar movement, and rather reflected new ideas of the Shuar movement and its leaders that both provided new opportunities and new sources of division among the Shuar. Yet, by focusing on participation in national politics using Western-style organisational strategies, federation leaders have only seen how local community participation has tended to dry up with serious consequences for both them and local communities.

One clear example here can be seen in the case of the *Comité Interfederacíonal*. While this entity was not entirely an initiative proposed by the NGOs, it nevertheless emerged from an assembly meeting funded by international and national NGOs with the aim of making it easier for them to support the legal and political strategies of the Shuar and Achuar people (*Comité Interfederacíonal* 2001; CDES 2002d; Pachamama 2001a, c).

Yet, such political and organisational practices have structural implications for project outcomes and for indigenous politics. The transformation of grassroots initiatives into a new way of organising indigenous politics has tended to create problems among Shuar communities and the federations. Indeed, even as the Shuar movement gained strength by using new political and legal measures supported by their NGO backers, it soon

became clear that the movement was becoming removed from the Shuar communities themselves. The Shuar movement had started as a land-based initiative responding to the threats to Shuar land from colonisation and other development projects. Yet, the recent trend has been to move away from this legacy in keeping with a more NGO-influenced agenda

Problems have also ensued as Western ways of organising have replaced traditional ways of operating in Shuar society. Decision-making before was made by consensus through public assemblies where all community members (at least in theory, the women were often silent in these meetings) could debate ideas and strategies. Luis Kuash (2004), thus recalled, "We had assembly meetings where every community member was able to have a say and debate livelihood and cultural issues. If there was a problem, the whole of the community [would] go together to resolve the issue". Decisions were made during informal visits among heads of households or by a community vote in assembly meetings. Yet, this set of practices is now often replaced by decision-making made in more formal settings including federation-based meetings in the main towns.

True, local assemblies persist and their role in community-based decision-making and the election of leaders can still be important. However, today, more and more of the decision-making takes place in small concentrated meetings in the towns with only the leaders working for the federations present rather than in the communities through communal meetings as before. Indeed, many Shuar leaders today spend most of their time in the towns working in offices, using mobile phones and travelling to other parts of Ecuador or even abroad. When they visit the communities they remain there for a short amount of time, mainly to participate in meetings or workshops, and when they approach local people they are no longer seen as being part of a community-based indigenous movement but rather as being the connection to national and international actors. Estaban Anguisha (2003), of the Naparuk village, bitterly complained:

> "Our leaders never visit the communities, they rather stay in the towns where they are working and living comfortably. They receive large amounts of money from international organisations that should be for the communities, but we never see any sign of this money. We also never find out about the meetings or about any of the decisions that are taken in such meetings".

Furthermore, assembly meetings tend to be dominated by those who control the most resources and who have connections with influential outsiders, notably in the NGO sector. One Shuar villager (anonymously) confided to me in 2003, "We want to search for another alternative, how to [best] develop our community, with our own decisions. This must be done through the participation of everyone. If there is a small group of leaders only making the decisions then they do not represent the interests and beliefs of the Shuar communities". This statement suggests how villagers' approaches to political and social problems can often be quite different from that of federation leaders who are formally there to represent their interests. My fieldwork emphasised again and again that the former rather speak about cultural traditions, traditional knowledge, mythology and livelihood concerns than of the 'Western-style 'political discourses utilised often by the latter.

Still, Shuar leaders are an in difficult position since they derive power today precisely from their position as intermediaries between Shuar communities and powerful outsiders. On the one hand, federation leaders have to respond to a complex process related to the experience of national expansion and economic development, along with the new possibilities to receive political and economic support from their international allies. On the other hand, Shuar residents in the interior have not entirely accepted the federations' ideas. In Shuar leaders' speeches, a great deal of time is devoted to questions of legitimacy-- both for themselves and for the political system on which that position is based. In fact, they are often divided as to how to best represent the interests and expectations of their people in the light of the demands of external actors such as national and international NGOs. Certain exasperation can be noted. For example, Adolfo Shakay (2004), a Shuar leader working for CONFENAIE, stated that "Contact with Western culture has not changed the ways I view social relationships" and he frequently reminds the Shuar residents that "I too am Shuar and I think as you do". This quote suggests Shuar leaders cannot ignore 'traditional' Shuar values and beliefs even as it attests to certain vulnerability on their part in relation to the people they claim to represent.

Although they speak of laws and rules that are part of the political process they want Shuar residents to accept, leaders repeatedly remind villagers that they are Shuar and as such also find those rules difficult to follow. And yet, differences on over cultural

identity are sometimes even manifested in the different rhetorical styles of villagers and federation leaders. Just as the former tend to evoke an image of 'traditional' values, culture, and collective power, the latter usually evoke an image of a new political order in which authority is culturally legitimised by newly representative legal institutions. Many of the issues addressed here are therefore related to the apparent transition from one political order to another, and therefore reveal the complex conflict of ideas present in communities, that are subject to ongoing cultural and political change.

A growing sense of social distance between Shuar federation leaders and Shuar villagers became clear to me when I met Gonzalo Nantip, a former FICSH leader, in Sucua in May 2004. Like most federation leaders, he had some formal education, acquired at one of the Salesian mission schools, and he had been active in the federation for many years. Dressed in collared shirts and carrying a mobile phone in the FICSH office where we had arranged the meeting, Gonzalo asserted the need for further investment in his federation. Yet, at the same time he seemed, to me at least, quite removed from the livelihood concerns of community members in Mukucham and Shinkiatam where I had been based. Moving his briefcase aside, Gonzalo explained: "We are from FICSH, and as elected leaders we understand the realities of our people. We are searching for ways to pursue community development". He viewed the Shuar as poor and desperately in need of development:

> "I have seen how the Shuar people live in the communities and how they suffer. I live here [in Sucua] and I live well. But out there [in the communities] there is so much need and we need help and projects for development: The role of our federation is to represent community sentiments to the outside world" (G. Nantip 2004).

However, Gonzalo had not been to the community in several months and some of his interpretations about what community members there wanted in terms of policies on development and oil exploitation conflicted with what I had just heard from community residents. Thus, while he said: "We [the federations] practice community involvement in awareness-raising and with it comes involvement in decision-making. We need to coordinate activities together with NGOs and other outsiders to receive national and international aid in order to stop the oil industry and support the base communities. That's the only way to oppose the oil companies", residents in the villages told me:

> "Today the federations are not practicing community participation. there is no community involvement. I mean that we lack democracy on decision-making, on the distribution of funds, and on the sharing of power. They talk about participation and community involvement but they do not involve the communities".

When I participated in a meeting in Puyo organised by the *Comité Interfederacíonal* in March 2004 that was organised and financed by Pachamama with technical assistance from SNV, I made a similar observation. Indeed, this meeting took place in a hotel outside the town and the only participants at the event were the leaders from the committee itself. It was a high profile event yet it was inaccessible to community people. The Shuar living in nearby communities did not even receive any information about this particular meeting. As Gonzalo Tseremp (2004), a young leader from Mukucham stated, "we never found out about this meeting and the resources used for it should rather been used for community development". He continued, "Why can our leaders live these rich lives in the towns, and participate in these meetings when our communities are poor and have nothing?" Indeed, a lack of communication goes hand in hand with a growing resentment of the 'rich lives' seemingly lived by their elected officials. This is a recurrent concern here. The introduction of the federations into community life has presented the interior Shuar with a different image of Shuar life. As noted, federation-based leaders rarely visit the *centros* and when they do they arrive in aeroplanes, wearing fine clothes, and bringing gifts. Their wealth is not attributed to 'traditional' community knowledge and power but to formal education and the ability to conduct business with an array of powerful and wealthy outsiders.

Thus, Shuar leaders are not always considered to represent either the wishes or the interests of the communities. Indeed, some villagers even claim that leaders are corrupted by the money they have received. Jorge Taki (2003) of Ijinti village, bitterly said, "our leaders use the funds for personal use or as benefit from privileged associations, often linked to the families of the leaders working for the federation [FICSH], and the benefits never reach the bases further away and in more need of help". Now FICSH is the largest formal representative of the Shuar people in relation to the government, development organisations and NGOs. And yet, in 2000, the majority of the leaders of FICSH came from just one *centro* (Chiguaza in Morona Santiago), and it was claimed by many community residents that Chiguaza received a disproportionate

share of projects and resources as a result. The other communities that were not so privileged were unhappy with this situation and people felt that FICSH had no interest in their problems. I even heard rumours that some leaders within FICSH had apartments in Quito, received huge wages, cars and other luxuries. For example, Silvia Tibi (2002), a Shuar woman living in Puyo, sharply argued "our leaders live in the towns and get wages from the foreign organizations. This is money that should go to the development of the communities, not into the pockets of a handful of leaders that do not even visit our base communities".

While some of these wilder claims are probably untrue, what is nonetheless significant is that these accusations are made at all. These statements show how much distrust there is between the communities and the leaders working for the federations. In the end, it would appear therefore that the new organisational approach of the Shuar federations has ironically hindered the formation of a coherent indigenous movement among the Shuar based on a uniform cultural identity. As Shuar leaders become gatekeepers between Western NGOs and the communities that they wish to assist, more and more energy is spent on attracting funding, meeting and reporting requirements less of assisting local communities. The leaders of the Shuar federations are now thus trying to maximise the gains of these local movements by bringing them into a national and international network. Yet, the political legitimacy enjoyed by the Shuar federations was in the first place constructed gradually, through the forging of dense networks linking local communities, such as Shinkiatam, with regional federations, national indigenous organisations and international NGOs. But tensions are now the norm, as resources and divisions grow reflecting the complex politics surrounding the articulation of Shuar cultural identity today.

5.4 Summary

In significant ways, indigenous organisations have utilised discourses of cultural identity in strategic ways in order to influence political agendas, access financial and institutional resources and obtain territorial and resource rights. The Shuar federations' discursive mobilisation of cultural identity has been no exception. What is of concern though, is how this seems to have created material and symbolic distance between

indigenous leaders, who manage identity discourse at the regional and national scale, and the residents of local communities, whose conceptualisations of identity seem to differ. Whereas much of the political discourse of organisations such as the Shuar federations revolves around abstract notions of political identity and ethnic nationality, the concerns of self-identification in local communities are often based in everyday practices of production and consumption as well as relations to the natural environment.

This chapter has thus assessed the reciprocal links and tensions between politics and culture in the construction of Shuar identity in an age of proposed oil development. The Shuar federations have been quite successful in some respects in forging a modern and even powerful strategic movement steeped in the assertion of Shuar culture. And yet, that 'culture' is hotly contested, not the least by local Shuar residents increasingly disaffected by the perceived 'alien' lifestyle of federation leaders. And yet, culturally-based strategies do not exhaust the array of ways in which Shuar federations interact with local communities as well as with powerful outsiders in their quest to assert Shuar autonomy. Indeed, as the next chapter shows, issues of territory and place are also quite crucial in that quest.

Chapter 6 Territory and Place

This chapter examines the process of Shuar community land-based mobilisation and how the Shuar federations have incorporated ideas of territory and place into their political actions. Chapter 5 demonstrated how indigenous organisations have utilised discourses of cultural identity in strategic ways in order to influence political agendas. access financial and institutional resources and generally advance Shuar rights. Meanwhile, in Chapter 7, we will analyse how resource conflicts have moved centre-stage as oil-related development challenges notions of 'community' oriented development. As will be seen there, Shuar people have resisted powerful state and corporate actors notably by asserting alternative community management schemes.

Here, though, the focus is on the geographical building blocks of the Shuar struggle--specifically territory and place. Control over territory is the key political motivating force of Shuar mobilisation. Processes of territorial control and associated land-based conflicts are central to Shuar strategies of resistance as a reaction to oil development projects. As will become clear, moreover, territory has even come to play an important role in the formation of Shuar cultural identity itself thereby highlighting the interlinked nature of the issues and concepts analysed in Chapter 5 to 7.

This chapter is organised in the following manner. First, it situates conflict over Shuar territory in a larger context of changes in Ecuadorian state policies that simultaneously precipitate local conflict and new opportunities for local political action. Second, it examines how Shuar leaders work with communities to elaborate a sophisticated and multi-faceted strategy of territorial defence. Third, it is necessary therefore to unpack how a local sense of place is understood by different actors. Here, we will consider place-based relations in several communities. This discussion leads on to an examination of how different senses of places evolve representing potential micro-power shifts relative to territorial initiatives. By exploring the process of 'placing culture', for example, we examine how more than one sense of place in Shuar territory can co-exist as well as how one of them may prevail through territorial initiatives. Finally, we examine how local place-based opportunities are asserted and how outside organisations influence the outcome of 'alternative' territorial initiatives.

6.1 Territorialization and Land Conflicts

In this section, the aim is to situate Shuar conflicts at the heart of this thesis in the wider context of state policy shifts related to notions of territoriality and territorial control in Ecuador. The Ecuadorian state is following a well-worn path in extending and intensifying its use of territorial strategies of resource and population control (see Chapter 2). It has increased its capacity (and willingness) to deploy violent means of land-use control, in part due to its involvement in the global political-economy and associated high stakes export-led growth strategies based on oil exploitation (Bebbington 2001; Sawyer 2004). The state has fully taken over the administration of rights to land in the hitherto 'peripheral' Ecuadorian Amazon region, the *Oriente*, through obligatory registration of land titles, a process that was initiated in the 1960s and intensified in the 1990s (see Chapter 4). The territorial definition of land has been expressed via a series of land codes regulating property ownership on indigenous lands and committing the state to surveying and mapping the entire territory of the *Oriente* to establish firm boundaries of land control (Perreault 2001; Sawyer 2004).

In theoretical terms, the nation-building project of the state is seen to be derived from the configuration of its territorial and political sovereignty over space and the monopoly of the means of violence and physical control therein (see Chapter 2). With regard to the 'construction of space', the nation-state relies on certain technologies and rules such as cartography, maps, census data as well as the physical integration of territories (by means of transport, education and colonisation projects). As such, Ecuador has divided its territory into economic and political zones, rearranging people and resources within these zones, while creating regulations to control how these local resources can be used (Radcliffe 2001b). As noted in Chapter 2, mapping has defined the territory, thus maps play a central role in the implementation and legitimisation of territorial rule.[1]

A brief overview of Ecuadorian territorialization demonstrates the varying yet persistent agenda of state control of land and resources in the *Oriente*. Different institutions have been charged with the task, and their relationship with the state has

[1] The map has been central to this process as it inscribes and marks objects but also as "a little machine for producing conviction in others" (Rose 1999:37).

been at times contradictory. Nevertheless, a specific spatial imaginary has been central to the development of the Ecuadorian nation-state (Radcliffe 2001b). In the establishment of state territoriality, the state has used different land reforms, development initiatives and mapping projects to guarantee geopolitical control, to overcome localism, to control international borders, and to provide a sound basis for development planning. As noted in Chapter 4, the *Oriente* was increasingly represented in state discourse in the 1960s as a core area in state territorialization--'Ecuador was, is and will be an Amazonian country' became the slogan of the Ecuadorian state. Although the region was undoubtedly shaped by geopolitical concerns, there was nevertheless an extensive effort by both military and civilian regimes of that time to overcome profound development problems facing the country.[2]

While in the process of nation building, the Ecuadorian state has attempted to instigate affiliations and structures of feeling of nationalism among its citizens (Radcliffe 2001b). These structures are profoundly geographic, based on popular sense of geopolitics, knowledge of 'national landscape' (Smith 1991) and a recognition of the national map (Anderson 1992). Geographic imaginations and tools can thereby provide the basis for the "collective internalisation of a territorial identity" (Escolar et al. 1994: 352). As argued by Gupta and Ferguson (1992:12), "States play a crucial role in the popular politics of place-making and in the creation of naturalised links between places and people". Through its discourses around an Amazonian development, the Ecuadorian state has attempted to generate an 'imagined community' (Anderson 1983) united by a primary affiliation to the nation-state. In this way, it is possible to explore how territoriality enters into the constitution of regulatory practices and political strategies, and indeed into the creation of particular sorts of governable spaces (Braun 2003).

As neoliberalism was adopted in the 1990s, the Ecuadorian state developed a more aggressive discourse and set of practices for the control of the *Oriente*. Thus, it elaborated a market-driven contest for land and resources by introducing legal changes,

---

[2] As noted in Chapter 4, the 1964 Agrarian Reform Law encouraged colonisation of the *Oriente* since the region was considered uninhabited and in need of economic transformation. To facilitate colonisation, the Government passed the Law of Fallow Lands in 1964 thereby declaring uncultivated lands uninhabited and hence available for colonisation.

such as the 1994 Agrarian Development Law, which provided that all land could be placed on the open market, thereby transforming Ecuadorian agriculture. As noted in Chapter 4, this legislation superseded the 1964 Agrarian Reform Law established thirty years before and was designed to rapidly 'modernise' the country through neoliberal reform. What is of interest here is the territorial consequences of the new legislation for the Shuar.

The new land reform built upon past policies insofar as lands deemed as 'unproductive' were taken over by the Ecuadorian state who could then benefit from the sale or use of these areas. This measure has jeopardised in turn Shuar titles to communally-held land in the *Oriente*. Many of these titles had originally been granted to the Shuar federation under *Ecuatoriano de Reforma Agraria y Colonizacíon* (IERAC) (see Chapter 4), but were now no longer recognised as legally valid by *Instituto Nacional del Desarrollo Agrario* (INDA). In contrast to past policies, property rights to land were granted by INDA which now had the power to divide and re-allocate 'reduced' plots of land. Thus, Shuar lands are increasingly being sold to outsiders or allocated to Shuar families for a variety of reasons thereby fragmenting Shuar collective land control and culture (Perruchon 2003). These plots are mainly found close to the towns and along the roads where the pressures to buy and sell land are the greatest. As a result, the Shuar have sought to secure title to their land claims by 'productive' activities: clearing forest for cattle pastures, commercialise agricultural production and other development projects. This strategy has indeed proved successful for many Shuar in securing a land base for their communities as well as in developing economic activities that enhance livelihoods. Yet, 'buying-into' a state-led territorialization and development package has also had adverse consequences.

The case of the Shuar community Chuwitayu is such a case. Chuwitayu is situated close to a road that runs from Macas to Puyo in the southernmost part of Pastaza (see Figure 4.5), where cattle ranching, agricultural production and cash-crop production have increased especially rapidly in the last decade. Here, many Shuar families have developed proposals for acquiring individual land titles linked to subsequent development for cattle ranching activities and cash-crop production (for example, cacao and coffee, see Chapter 7). Thus, at a meeting which I attended during my fieldwork in the area, Calixto Kuash (2003), the community's leader, asserted his right to acquire

private land titles: "With the help of new legalisation we can develop and acquire economic progress and legal titles for our land to increase commercialisation and direct market involvement". Similarly, Calixto's son, Manuel Kuash, (2003) asserted in the same meeting: "Now we [the Shuar] can own our own land or even sell our land to colonists. Many communities here in the [Pastaza] area have started doing this since they need money". These sort of statements were mentioned by other residents as well and are interesting since they show a strong interest in the economic benefits to be derived from acquiring or even selling land among Shuar villagers.

The spread of cattle ranching has occurred even in 'remote' parts of Shuar territory. For example, Shinkiatam was formed in 1990 as a way for Shuar communities to access and safeguard land and it also had the crucial function of regulating access to communally-held land titles as well as mediating land disputes among community members and neighbouring communities (M. Tupuki 2004; L. Kuja 2004). This community was until recently surrounded by forest. However, in the last decade cattle ranching has increased rapidly there (as well as the rate of deforestation). One resident thus told me that he now had sixty cattle, while another one owned about twenty-five animals. This is not uncommon today in villages such as Shinkiatam. This change became evident when I walked with Lauro Kuja and his brother Iban from Taisha (a military base in Morona Santiago) to Shinkiatam, a four-hour trek into the rainforest, firstly along a dirt road and then on small clear-cut paths. I had stayed earlier with their family in Shinkiatam while undertaking research. The road that we walked along had been built in the year 2000 to provide access to a port that has been constructed on the *Rio Panki* in order to link local communities to the Taisha military base. It has also thereby facilitated increased colonisation of the region, greater market access, rapid cultural change (a point made in the discussion of cultural identity in Chapter 5). When I asked Lauro about this, the answer was unequivocal: "We need to clear the land in order to acquire legal titles to it, but cattle have also proven to be the most profitable source of income for our communities" (L. Kuja 2004).

The issue of Shuar commercialisation will be discussed in Chapter 7. Here, it is important to understand how the Shuar have changed their understanding of land and private property as a practical response to the land reform described above (in Chapter 4). Moreover, it demonstrates that the Shuar who live in areas where land and

agriculture have become highly commercialised, have started to favour official land titling, as a means to ensure individual and collective development. In particular, it has heightened the Shuar's need for land in as much as land titles are used as security for loans even as the Government has increased its capacity to carry out threats to dispossess those without legal documents (Sawyer 1997). These changes have convinced many people of the absolute need to obtain land titles if and where they can, albeit at the cost of the local environment as well as 'traditional' activities.

Thus, this process of land re-allocation and associated commercialisation of agricultural production has notably had positive *and* negative consequences. On the one hand, some Shuar have secured legal titles to their communal land. As noted by Cesar Chumbi (2003), who lives in Ijinti (close to Chuwitayu) beside the road from Puyo to Macas (see Figure 4.5) and where I conducted fieldwork in 2003 and 2004, "Our family moved away from the interior to establish Chuwitayu to enable our family to gain economic progress and to generate an income. This land now belongs to us after we acquired legal titles to it".[3] This is a positive development, as seen from these villagers' point of view. However, on the other hand, Shuar land-based practices have been drastically transformed in the process. For example, Jorge Taki (2004), who also lives in Ijinti, argued, "Chuwitayu has lost the connection to our ancestral territories. The state granted it the land, which originally belonged to the Kuash and Mukucham families, and now the land is transformed by cattle ranching and clearing of wood". This was borne out by my own direct observations. Thus, when I visited Chuwitayu, most men in the community were involved in logging activities to generate further income for their families. As one of these men explained this activity "substantially enhanced my family's income" (C. Kuash 2003). This case exemplifies the conflicting processes regarding land reforms and privatisation of indigenous land that have shaped Shuar communities with increasing force in recent years.

Further, the 1994 Agrarian Development Law corresponded to the Hydrocarbon Law passed in 1993 by enabling large-scale settlement of remote areas, the creation of vast

---

[3] Four generations ago, Chumbi Kuash, the father of Luis Kuash who was mentioned previously, moved away from Shiram Pupunas and became primarily responsible for the establishment of Chuwitayu, which is situated about three hours walk from Shiram Pupunas. According to IERAC rules, dividing Shiram's territory into smaller plots for 'legitimate' forms of development was the basis for legally creating Chuwitayu. Today, the Kuash family inhabits a large percentage of this 'communally' held Shuar land.

infrastructure networks, and large-scale expansion of oil development in the *Oriente*. With oil revenues to hand, Ecuador engaged in a number of measures intended in part to create an inclusionary nation-state. Oil-based development permitted the extension of state sovereignty over the territory for the first time in modern era. In fact, oil development became crucial for Ecuador's wider efforts to 'modernise' and 'develop' in the global economy and it was the key component of the government's larger national scheme- the '*Apertura Ecuador 2000*'- and the subsequent round of oil block leasing (the ninth round announced in 2000) that was discussed in Chapter 4. At the heart of this plan to accelerate oil development was an ambitious attempt to redefine territorial understanding of Ecuador's *Oriente* through what I call oil-based territorialization.

The state-designed oil block concession map most clearly illustrates this (see Figure 4.2.3). First, the map shows how mapmaking is inherently a political practice and a tool used to control land and people. As such, the state gave each oil block a juridical name and a title (for example, block 24 in Shuar lands) that bore no resemblance to how indigenous people delineated their territories, let alone divisions between people as well as their multiple indigenous authority structures that themselves drew upon prior legislation administrated by IERAC. Dr. Bolivar Beltran (2004), a lawyer working for The Institute for Science and Interdisciplinary Studies (ISIS) argued that "the oil concession blocks do not represent indigenous territorial jurisdiction, local authority and land-use practices". Rather, they were established merely as means for the Ecuadorian state to 'open up' new Amazonian areas, including Shuar territory, for oil exploitation.

Second, the map demonstrates how oil-based territorialization misrepresents local land-based practices and thereby transforms the landscape. The land that now 'belonged' to the Ecuadorian state, and subsequently through privatisation to oil companies, such as Burlington Resources, was in fact part of Shuar society long used and managed by the latter despite being still thickly covered the forest. Mario Melo (2002), of *Centro de Derechos de Económicos y Sociales* (CDES), observed that the Borja administration thus "reallocated land titles to meet oil industry plans but which bore no resemblance to pre-existing culturally and politically defined territorial divisions". A territorial vision

predicated on oil development was simply superimposed on the complex territorial markers that 'defined' Shuar lands (see below).

Following on from this, oil-based territoriality clearly did not correspond to Shuar land-use patterns or understandings of land management. Alfonso Mukucham (2004), from Mukucham community, simply observed in this regard that "the land blocks are ours, and we make this land live". He was here referring to the processes by which the Shuar managed multiple landscapes. For generations, for example, extended family networks had maintained their *selva* (primary hunting and subsistence grounds) and their *chakra* (managed forest and hunting grounds) near the communities. The forest has thus played an integral role in creating the local landscape. What the Shuar call land, *la tierra*, is explicitly related to locally-based cultural practices and the way the Shuar use and manage local natural resources. Indeed, it is very much a humanised environment where families living in multiple homes that are spread over the landscape shape the species content, distribution, and diversity of the forest through planting and selectively tending of the vegetation. These places thus emerged from historical relations of land use and management of local resources (discussed in more detail below). Patricia Kuash Vargas (2003) of Ijinti argued: "You know, the land is ours and theirs too [i.e. the state]--not solely theirs. For generations we have maintained the *chakras* near our communities, thus we also claim this land". This observation nicely shows how Shuar residents considered part of the INDA defined oil blocks to be within 'traditional' Shuar territory (C. Tupcac 2004; C. Jinpikit 2004).

As such, oil-based territoriality contravened both the spirit and practice of the area since the state chose to ignore indigenous perceptions of place and land in favour of geometric lines and shapes devoid of any sense of place. Oil-based territoriality is thus about the erasure of Shuar notions of place and territory as a pre-condition for the smooth exploitation of oil. Bosco Najandey (2004), one former leader of FIPSE thus observed, "All these new oil blocks and creation of new territorial boundaries are causing a lot of confusion and disruption among our people. Our land cannot be bought and is not for sale. It *belongs* communally and collectively to the Shuar people". Indeed, according to many Shuar leaders, the oil concession blocks were ultimately intended to divide the indigenous people, undermine local solidarity, and erode embedded cultural practices of living within the landscape. In effect, oil-based

territorialization shows how 'governability' was changing within the Ecuadorian nation-state and what contradictions may lay therein.

Inevitably, the new policies promoted by the oil block leasing rounds have provoked crises of governance and accountability in Ecuador and have encouraged new political actions by indigenous groups. The Shuar federations' strategies that have already been initially treated in Chapter 5 were responses to these processes occurring in my research area. More specifically here, policies designed to expand oil production and open up Shuar lands for oil exploitation instigated antagonism between the Shuar and state plans predicated on the subversion of locally meaningful territorialities.

Nevertheless, attempts to define an oil-based territorialization have not managed to eliminate local people's geographical imaginations. Indeed, another form of territoriality is being increasingly asserted in Ecuador, notably by those indigenous people directly affected by the state's resource-driven territorialization. They have challenged state-centred notions of a unified and homogenous space thereby creating new spaces through which to express notions of 'alternative' citizenship, community, and identity (Radcliffe and Westwood 1996; Radcliffe 2001a). Thus, state territoriality in Ecuador is a highly contested space, with indigenous groups generating different mappings and images of national space. As the state has increased its' capacity for enforcement, though, conflicts have erupted between state agencies, oil companies and indigenous communities. As a result, although the Ecuadorian state has increased its capacity to implement oil development projects, success has been far from certain.

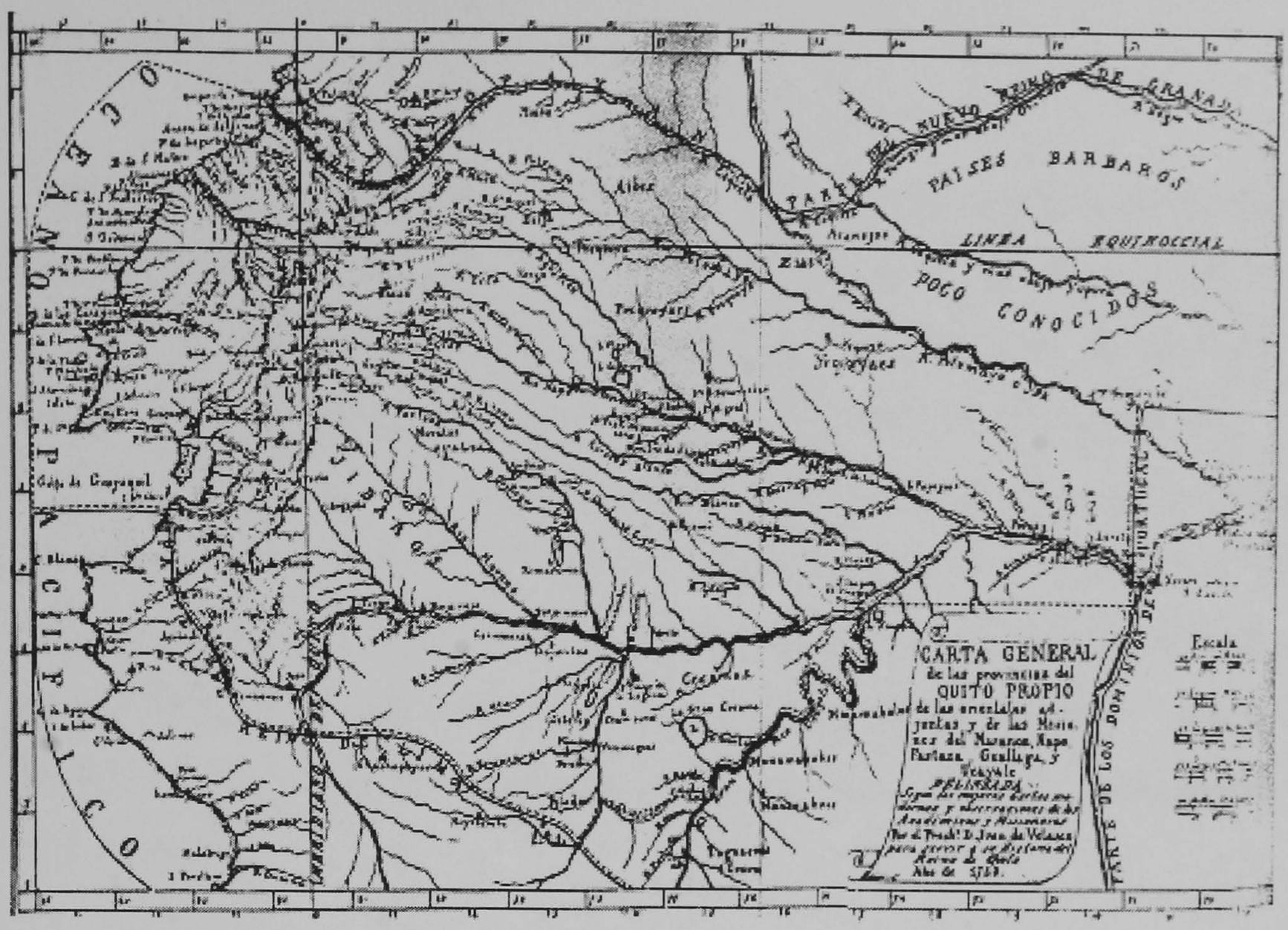
Resistance to oil-based territoriality has been reflected in a series of meetings held in Shuar territory. To take but one example, it was the focus of a meeting held in Shinkiatam in October 2002 that I attended. Here, Shuar leaders stressed the adverse social consequences of the state-imposed vision of oil-based territoriality and bitterly denounced the neoliberal reforms that underpinned such territoriality (*Comité Interfederacíonal* 2002). A statement directed to the participants in the meeting outlined the assembly's objectives: "By the means of this assembly, the Shuar people are exercising our legitimate right to voice our opinion and to decide what will happen on our lands, especially in respect to oil development. We will not allow oil development to start" (P. Antuash 2002). Similarly, Sandu Kuamar (2002) asserted:

"This event aims to present the government and the oil company [Burlington Resources] with the conditions necessary to guarantee socio-cultural and environmental security and the defence of land and natural resources in Morona Santiago". These 'conditions' did not include the subversion of Shuar notions of territoriality by oil-based territorialization.

Oil-based territorialization was seen to be as nonsensical as it was lethal to Shuar interests. Thus, Francisco Sandu, a former FIPSE President, showed an old map of Shuar lands which are now located in Morona Santiago province on a large sheet of paper at the October 2002 meeting (see Figure 6.1). He pointed out major rivers running through the area, located each community represented by FIPSE, and then also demarcated Burlington's oil concession. He then repeated words that I was to hear many times during my stay in the region: "Petroleum does not only affect one community, it affects all of us and our territory. The Government has divided our territory into blocks. But these blocks make no sense" (F. Sandu 2002). Francisco thus strongly criticised the government's position, even saying that it had no right to make oil claims in Shuar territory. He added: "Oil has brought environmental degradation to much of the *Oriente*, and protection of oil interests through militarization of oil-producing areas has helped stifle our efforts to understand or resist oil activities on our lands" (F. Sandu 2002). Certainly, oil development and ensuing colonisation facilitated by new road networks has meant an increasing loss of control over Shuar lands and livelihoods notwithstanding the case of Shuar families that have adapted to change discussed above. As a result, they have suffered most of the negative impacts while enjoying few of the benefits of that development.[4]

[4] Suzana Sawyer (2004) argues that given the imbalance of power, especially between state/oil interests and indigenous people, and the lack of enforceability of land agreements on the companies, the indigenous people have been unable to ensure the protection of their interests during oil development. She basis this claim on research carried out elsewhere in the *Oriente* than that area covered in this thesis

Figure 6.1 Shuar territory



Source: CARE 2003

The politically fraught nature of the oil blocks was also emphasised. Thus, Pedro Tsere (2002), a leader of FICSH said, "If we begin to defend these land blocks, there will be conflict. If we allow for divisions within Shuar territory, we will be divided. We demand that we get recognition as a people, as a nationality, as a people whose ancestral territory is one". This statement was interesting since it exemplified a recent shift in the focus of the Shuar federations, in particular by FICSH, which privileged the articulation of nationhood and territorial boundaries according to ethnic nationality based on processes discussed in Chapter 5. Here, is important to see how Shuar leaders consciously meshed ideas of territory and ethnic nationality.

Pablo Tsere made this clear to me in an interview in the federation's office in Sucua in February 2004. Pablo emphasised that "Shuar nationality and the construction of a Shuar nation are important components in our strategies for territorial defence". He added, "Territory belongs collectively and integrally to our *pueblo* [people] as a nationality. It cannot be bought or sold, it is not an economic status of wealth and possession, in which property-regimes can over-lap and co-exist, yet over which a specific nationality hold the control" (P. Tsere 2004). This statement shows how Shuar leaders here increasingly demanded the legalisation and autonomous control of the

ancestral territory of the Shuar and that this territory should be granted to the Shuar as a *nationality*.

Thus, FICSH has attempted to strategically link territory and nationality to its own strategies. Here, it has sought to propagate a view of the *Oriente* as the well-defined territory of specific indigenous people each with their own unique national identity based in turn on place-based cultural identity and ancestral domicile. In fact, most FICSH leaders defined themselves as 'members of the Shuar nationality' and discussions of identity largely centred around membership in an ethnic nationality and occupation of ethnic territory (but not the villagers, see below). This territorial vision of the *Oriente* as a land comprised of ethnic nationalities is of course designed to challenge the vision of an empty resource-rich 'frontier' epitomised in oil-based development.

The promotion of Shuar nationhood as part of the strategy of territorial defence is also clear in FIPSE's wider initiatives of territorial defence. This can be seen in a document produced by FIPSE in 2003 entitled Project *Ií Nunké* (Our territory):

> "Territory is the primordial base for the survival of the Shuar nationality that guarantees socio-economic, political-organisational and cultural development. More than signifying the physical and material aspects of a region, territory for the Shuar encompasses both the moral-cosmological and the political-organisational complexes that shape identity and social relations" (FIPSE 2003:1).

This statement strategically links the ideas of nationality, territory, culture and political autonomy, a conceptual linkage central to the discourse of plurinationality. It serves to legitimise indigenous claims to territorial and political autonomy by interlinking cultural identity and place. According to Shuar leaders, indigenous territory was both a practical and imaginable realm, extending over a specific geographically bordered national 'space' characterised by a variety of specific place-based cultural identities, yet in which a distinct overall nationality held sway. In particular, territory became the primary political idiom of social and cultural identity that promised self-determination over Shuar territory--something that was simultaneously a key component in the process of ethnic nationality building. As such, territorial defence has emerged as key

strategy among Shuar leaders in their struggle to fend off the threats posed by state sanctioned oil territoriality.

The discussion so far has shown how Shuar leaders in particular conceptualise territory through discursive and political articulations. Anger among Shuar leaders led to a common strategy to defend Shuar territory against the oil companies resulting in the landmark Shuar mobilisation of August 1999 and the subsequent court case that were discussed in Chapter 5. What is important to stress here is that this mobilisation organised by FIPSE was the culmination of a long and on-going struggle to defend Shuar ancestral lands. In particular, the actions taken by FIPSE between 1998 and 2000 strategically sought to reconfigure the material, political and symbolic meanings of land and territory in Ecuador, in an attempt to re-define the terrain upon which future struggles among state, corporate and indigenous actors would take place. Indeed, these high-profile indigenous actions were crucial in helping to focus indigenous opposition to state-sanctioned oil development (Falconi 2001; Garzon 2002). Yet, they also built on a decade of smaller-scale mobilisations by the Shuar to acquire legal titles to ancestral lands. Together, then, these multi-scale strategies helped to define indigenous opposition in a territorial idiom. The issue of Shuar territorial rights was thereby highlighted as an issue needing of attention.

In attempting to understand the ways in which the Shuar here mobilised to defend their lands and livelihoods in the face of state-sanctioned oil-based territoriality noted so far, it is essential now to look at the different elements of land based claims and territorial defence developed by the Shuar. This chapter will thus next focus on how the Shuar federations elaborated initiatives for the defence of Shuar territory to better understand how the Shuar emerged as a movement critical of oil-based territorialization--all with an eye to the geographical articulation of Shuar struggle.

6.2 Elaborating a Territorial Defence

My first encounter with the Shuar occurred during my preliminary fieldwork during 2002 when I visited Morona Santiago and the Shuar federations FIPSE and FICSH. Community leaders had founded the federations (FICSH in 1964 and FIPSE in 1990)

because they believed they needed their own institutions to advocate for cultural autonomy and land rights (see Chapters 4 and 5). They also hoped the federations would serve as a catalyst for local people to design and implement their own development programs and gain legal titles to their lands. From the beginning, the Shuar federations thus organised base communities to work for legal title to community lands notably via federation-designed projects that encouraged agricultural development (for example, cattle ranching and cash-crop production).

The federations rapidly generated much enthusiasm with local people who had long felt marginalised and discriminated against. As one Shuar community member typically remarked: "We have been discriminated against since the first Spanish arrived, that is 500 years of marginalisation. As a result, we organised our communities into the federation since we needed a tool to defend our lands, culture and livelihoods" (L. Kuash 2003). As Chapter 4 highlighted, this vision is a reaction to a history in which the state has usurped control over indigenous lands and resources both to assert its own notion of territorial control and national identity, as well as to promote new economic activities.

Given this political activism, it is surprising to note that it was only in the late 1990s that the concept of territorial rights and its defence emerged in the region as a formal basis for building the Shuar struggle. Indeed, vigorously promoted thereafter by Shuar leaders, territoriality soon became crucial to the political strategies of the Shuar federations and was a decisive element in the development of the Shuar movement as a whole. In particular, the importance of defending Shuar territory has been linked by Shuar leaders to the enhanced threat posed by outside actors, such as the Ecuadorian state and Burlington Resources via their oil-based territorial plans.

For Shuar leaders, territorial defence can only make sense if it is part of a wider recognition of the role of the Shuar people in shaping the social, cultural, spiritual, political and natural conditions of their lands. That recognition is not compatible with oil-based territorialization. Bosco Najandey of FIPSE stated at an assembly meeting in Makuma in Morona Santiago, in March 2004, for example, "currently, Burlington holds the concession for oil block 24. But our only wish was that the oil companies would not start working within our ancestral territories, the oil does not simply affect just one

community, many of us manage this land and our lives will be adversely affected by oil activities". Pablo Tsere (2004) of FICSH meanwhile linked the sense of Shuar territoriality more widely to the struggle against all unwanted outsider interventions when he observed: "We defend our territory so it cannot be manipulated by other political interests, or by the colonists, or any other group of people that can damage our organisation. This is the reason why we need to strengthen our organisational strategies, to be united, to maintain our own politics, and to defend our territory". These statements were typical of those made by federation leaders as they sought to mobilise Shuar communities. Above all, they demonstrate that territorial defence has emerged as a key component in the process of Shuar strategizing.[5] Confronted by new pressures on local natural resources and associated 'land grabbing' in the region, the Shuar had to quickly develop new strategies to defend their lands, such as the legalisation of community land and the definition of a collective sense of territory among the Shuar.

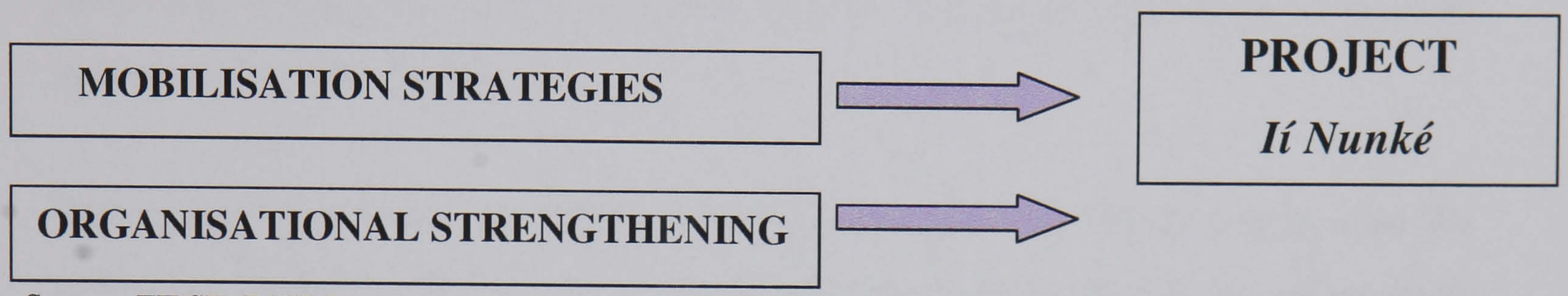
Simultaneously, as discussed in Chapter 5, the Shuar have learned about the effects of oil development from outsiders such as national and international NGOs. CDES, Pachamama and SNV in particular assisted in the defence of the culture and territories of the Shuar people in Morona Santiago. Pachamama's representatives, Maria Belen Paez and David Elliot were thus in attendance at the March 2004 meeting in Makuma. Maria asserted there that "though you are in the middle of the forest, you are not alone. Your struggle is not isolated. We will support you to build further strength and success in your campaign". David continued: "Pachamama will assist in strengthening the ability to defend indigenous lands against outside encroachment; including demarcation, mapping, and legal work to secure clear title to land, and support initiatives of the federations that strengthen the territorial defence".

Project *Ií Nunké* (Our territory) is a good example of this kind of federation-led initiative that has been developed to assert collective territorial rights (see Figure 6.2). It was first developed by FIPSE in 1997 but only finalised in 2002. This project included a proposal for the *Ordenamiento Territorial Indígena* (POT), which is an integral part of legally-mandated *Circumscripcíon Territorial Indígena* (CTIs) and is

[5] Territory is here also deployed as a reason for enhancing the position of the federations themselves in as much as one of their central tasks was now clearly one of territorial defence.

based upon the assertion of collective rights in indigenous territories.[6] The project thus incorporated key legal components from recent official legislation (above all, the CTIs) to acquire collective titles for Shuar territory and thereby to control the natural resources and land within it (Pachamama 2001b).[7]

Figure 6.2 Project *Ií Nunké*



Source: FIPSE (2003:2)

Project *Ií Nunké* is interesting here for various reasons as seen from Figure 6.2. First, the project was clearly based on a strategy to obtain full legal standing for Shuar collective territory. As Manuel Najandey (2002), a FIPSE leader stated: "The central aim of these efforts is to gain collective title to territory for us, the Shuar, as defined by Ecuadorian laws. It is possible by the communities, at least legally, to stop the continued encroachment of our lands and territory". For FIPSE, this included acquiring collective legal titles for the *centros* affiliated to the federation. While encouraging the acquisition of collective titles to Shuar land, it also sought to promote local "cultural identity, strengthen ancestral claims, enhance self-determination and protect the resources of the region" (FIPSE 2003:1).

Second, *Ií Nunké* became a centrepiece around which FIPSE leaders would organise other political activities in reaction to increasing threats from the oil industry. As noted in Chapter 5, FIPSE organised new political and legal strategies to defend Shuar cultural identity and collective territorial rights in the face of impending oil exploitation. In fact, *Ií Nunké* became the core around which the federation intensified

---

[6] As noted in Chapter 4, Article 84 of the National Constitution recognises distinctive collective rights related to indigenous territories. Most importantly, CTIs provides the legal means for indigenous groups to acquire legal collective titles to their lands and the right to maintain their own organisation, jurisdiction and authority (Article 224 and 241 of the National Constitution).

[7] Note though that Article 247 of the 1998 Ecuadorian Constitution preserves the state's claim over subsoil resources, including oil.

its community mobilising activities by organising court battles, demonstrations and civil disobedience actions (for example, sit-downs and blockades of construction sites). Francisco Sandu (2002), former FIPSE President stated: "Since more oil concessions are likely to come, it is critical that we develop a program for the defence of Shuar territory to illustrate how we can manage and control our ancestral territory". Similarly, Rafael Pandam (2002) asserted: "The project was designed to promote an organisational strategy for the achievement of cultural, economic, social, territorial and political rights and the defence of natural resources and the environment against the threat posed by the oil industry".

Third, with the assistance of CDES, Pachamama, and SNV, FIPSE leaders used the project *Ií Nunké* to strengthen the organisational capacity of the federation itself (Pachamama 2002a). Harko Koster (2004), who is working for SNV, an NGO who has been assisting FIPSE in the elaboration of the project, asserted: "*Ií Nunké* was created to contest the overall legality of land grabbing and encroachments by the Ecuadorian state and allied oil companies and to strengthen the organisational strategies of the federation itself". Jose Serrano (2004) of CDES, similarly noted, "The aim of the project was to strengthen the territorial defence of Shuar territory and to elaborate new organisational, political and legal strategies to be able to legalise it". These project-linked strategies included media awareness, education, national and international lobbying, administrative functions and the development of GIS (Geographical Information System), in co-ordination with AmazonGISNet.

The latter component is of particular interest here. Thus, the project involved the implementation of GIS systems as a means to systematically map Shuar territory based on local social-historical criteria and management plans. The main objectives here were: 1) to identify place-based cultural practices; 2) to define territorial boundaries based on 'traditional' Shuar knowledge; and 3) to encourage the participation and empowerment of local Shuar communities (Pachamama 2002c). Indeed, while mapping has been a tool traditionally used *against* indigenous people who had lacked the means to graphically depict the use of their territory, this type of initiative allows the Shuar federations to make their own maps thereby 'grounding' in cartographic form their alternative vision. To gain land titles or to define their own territorial vision, indigenous

federations, such as FICSH and FIPSE, prepare their own maps showing the extent of their land claims, thereby denying the validity of oil-based territorialization.

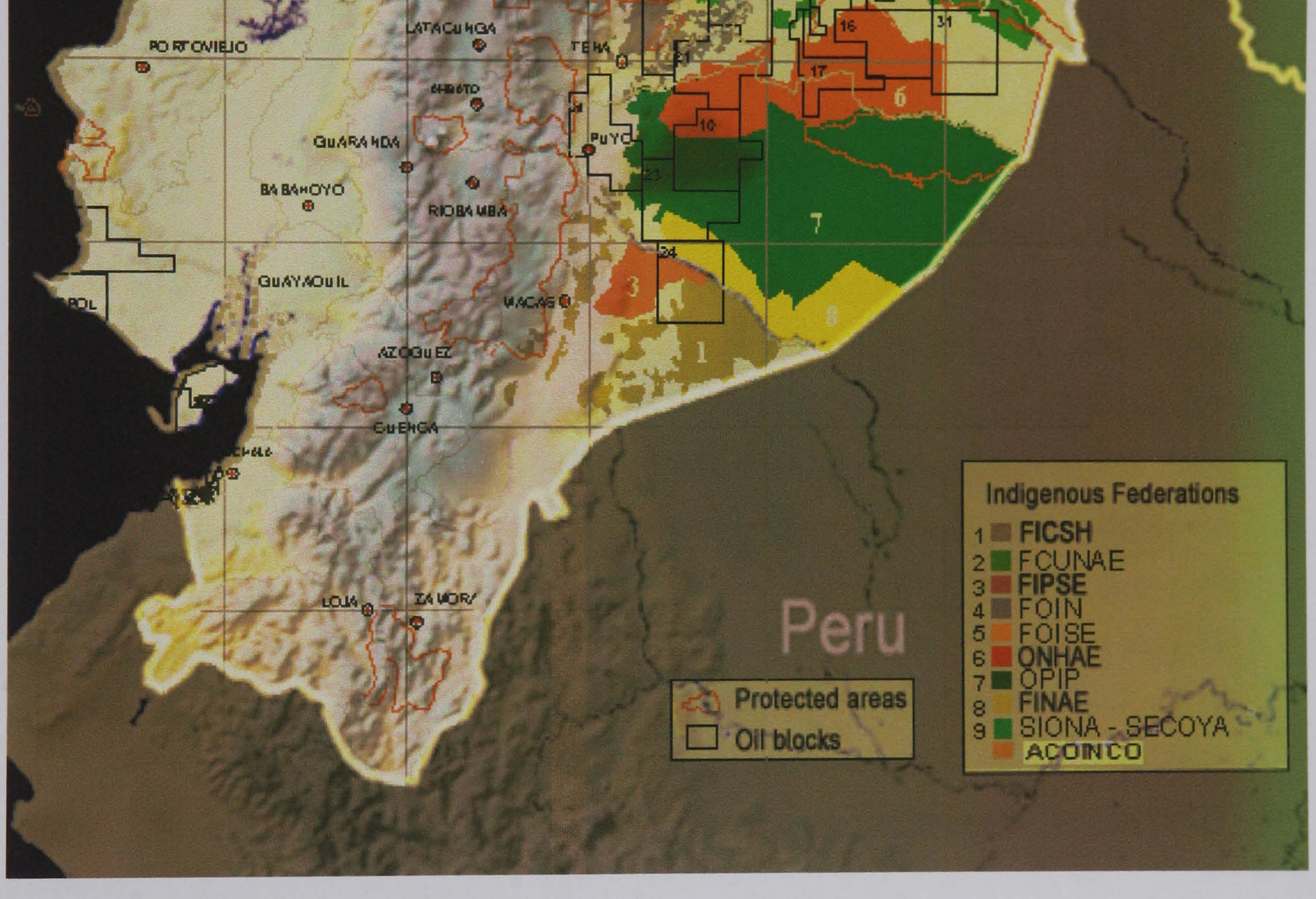
By providing 'visual' proof of alternatives to oil-based territorialization and to state development projects that generally see the *Oriente* as an 'empty' space promising unlimited opportunities for development, these maps provide a distinct alternative to that organised by the state. Mapmakers in the Shuar federations are thus key actors in the realisation of Shuar projects for territorial defence in terms of finalising legal claims. As of 2005, these projects are still relatively new such there has been little concrete progress so far. However, they are likely to be vital tools to help Shuar communities to map their territory and thereby, it is hoped, to strengthen their ability to attain territorial aims. Yet, it is important to note here that many of the specific claims made by local communities are not fully incorporated into the project's mapping process. The process of community-based claims to land and resources will be discussed in detail below. Even so, in the process of elaborating alternative territorial projects, such as *Ií Nunké*, such mapping helps to justify and thereby strengthen the role of the Shuar federations as essential intermediaries at a time when they have been the focus of some criticism, for example, see Chapter 5.

Much of the energy of this project is specifically linked to the transformation of informal grassroots initiatives already discussed in Chapter 5. Indeed, *Ií Nunké* is not the only project elaborated by the Shuar federations for the defence of Shuar territory based on collective rights. For example, FICSH is in the process of defining a project for winning legal titles in its main areas of operation (see Figure 6.3, which summarises the main territorial areas of indigenous federations in the *Oriente*) for a collective territorial vision based on the provisions guaranteed under the CTIs. While still incomplete in 2005, it seems from early drafts that the proposal reflects much of thinking behind the processes and strategies that were incorporated in FIPSE's *Ií Nunké*.[8] This is illustrated from a statement by Rosiendo Nunkias (2004), the main coordinator of the FICSH proposal: "The aim of the project is to defend the collective

[8] Given the early stage of the elaboration of the proposal, I was unable to acquire a copy of FICSH's project for legal titling of land in its main areas of operation. Here, I refer to data I obtained during interviews held with FICSH leaders.

territory of the Shuar people to protect our culture, identity, and livelihoods as well as the securing of our right to self-determination and autonomous governance".

Figure 6.3 Indigenous Federations' Areas of Influence



Source: Kristian Bjureby 2005

The main difference, however, seems to be in how the projects should be implemented. On the one hand, the discourses that formed FIPSE-based project *Ií Nunké* were based around the aspirations to "acquire legal recognition for Shuar territory and a plan for the sustainable management of local natural resources" (FIPSE 2003:2). Consequently, territory is thought of in terms of an articulation between socio-cultural forms of use

and the natural environment in a place-specific locality. On the other hand, the FICSH-based project uses provisions under CTIs in order to "politically administer their ancestral territory...and so that the Shuar can have their own authority to govern the territory" (R. Nunkias 2004). Thus, according to Rosiendo Nunkias (2004), the project aimed "to strengthen [our] collective rights and the ownership of [our] ancestral territory without contradicting national laws and politics". This statement reflects a visible political focus and an emphasis on local political autonomy and territorial defence.

Much of the discussion so far has been concerned with describing different federation initiatives to illustrate their strategies and responses to oil-based territorialization. Initiatives for territorial defence are seen to be good by proponents in the federations because they articulate action plans devised notably by those who would be most affected by them--that is, by local communities themselves, albeit with federation input and guidance. And yet, they are still devised by the federations who, as we have seen, do not respond to all Shuar people judging by the criticisms discussed in Chapter 5. Shuar leaders have thus been blamed for using the projects for an alternative territorial vision to simply advance their own position within the national political system rather than representing the 'true' interests of Shuar communities (see Section 6.4). However, rhetoric aside, Shuar leaders still maintain that the projects are important since "they promote cultural identity, strengthen organisational strategies, and enable the communities to gain legal title to their lands" (P. Pandam 2002). Above all, these sorts of alternative projects provide a sense of hope that the oil companies and the Ecuadorian state may finally need to respect the territorial rights of the Shuar as political momentum gathers behind the alternative territorial vision of the Shuar (even though the state has not yet recognised any territorial claims made by the Shuar federations as of December 2005).

It is perhaps intuitive to suggest that federation-led projects will dominate claims to territory and land because they are the most visible nationally and internationally. However, as we will see, this is but one of several options open to Shuar people. We also need therefore to examine other types of place-based articulations. Such heterogeneity in responses needs to be grasped in order to appreciate the overall dynamics of initiatives for an 'alternative' territorial defence. First, though, it is

necessary to unpack how a 'local sense of place' is understood in the context of local place-based struggles. The focus here is on access rights to land and resources that are seen as to play a key part in the assertion of local sense of place as well as associated place-based opportunities.

6.3 Asserting a Local Sense of Place

The aim of this section is to understand how the Shuar people develop a local sense of place. To that end, and building on the theoretical concerns set out in Chapter 2, firstly we consider place-based relations in several communities where fieldwork was conducted. This leads us to an examination of how different local discourses evolve and how they come to represent micro-power shifts linked to altered land-use practices. Secondly, by exploring the power relations associated with 'placing culture', we examine how different local senses of place can and do co-exist as well as how some may be advantaged through association with federation-led projects for territorial defence.

Chapter 2 suggested that local people develop and articulate highly specific experiences of 'living' in the context of a specific place.[9] These experiences may explain in turn local responses to territorial initiatives. The assumption here is that experience of place can be inferred by assessing how local people weave elements of their place-based experience into discursive struggles. Three communities will be examined briefly here now to explore how the place-based experiences of these communities have led to distinctive place-linked discourses about place, culture and identity. Such heterogeneity pf expression and ideas needs to be grasped in order to understand the wider links between local opportunities, place and territorial initiatives.

The local experience of a place is first examined using the case of Naparuk in Morona Santiago. At an initial glance, there appeared to be plenty of resources at the

[9] Oslender (2004) examines recent mobilisations by social movements of black communities in Colombia. He draws both on the objective of place and the subjective feelings that are derived from living in a place to demonstrate how these have impacted on specific forms of organising adopted by black communities.

community's disposal (see Figure 6.4)[10]. And yet, this condition was scarcely reflected in how people described their life--descriptions that suggested an experience of place as one of loss and abandonment. A common view was thus that the balance of power was not in their hands such that they had to struggle to obtain from the land what was more easily obtained in the past. A local woman thus commented: "It is hard to catch fish and to hunt animals now because the oil companies have come and polluted the rivers and destroyed the forest" (M. Martinez 2004). If local people were keen to fight such depredations, they were nonetheless frustrated by the lack of outside support. Indeed, a key discourse here is one of the federations coming 'too late' to protect the community. As one community resident stated, "we hoped they [the federations] would come to protect our area from the oil companies, but so far we have not seen any help" (J. Anguisha 2003). Their sense of place was thus expressed in part as one of marginality--forgotten both by federation leaders and outside officials: "We have no radio, so we cannot call for help, we have to travel to Santiago to use theirs [the municipal], but it is too expensive to go there" (M. Anguisha 2003).

In the community of Mukucham, meanwhile, the experience of place reflected notably a 'reciprocating relationship' with biodiversity[11] that had been disrupted by outsiders (see Figure 6.5). Here, the discourse was one of holistic inter-dependent biodiversity being undermined by outside 'development'. Luis Mukucham (2004) summarised both the interdependency and the loss when he said: "The land is our mother and our home. It is our sustenance for the indigenous peoples, our ecology, our fauna... it gives us a lot. The great oil companies must think about this: that if they destroy our forest, there will be no life. The Shuar will use all their strength to protect their lands and the lives of our families". Ilda Mukucham, one of Luis's wives, is an older woman who did not speak Spanish (one of her sons acted as a translator) but who likewise said, "Our elders, our grandparents have told us that *la selva* [the forest] and the land are the life force for us. Thank you I say to our elders, who have left us this great extension of land. It is our

---

[10] All the community maps that are discussed here are transcriptions of hand-drafted maps drawn by community residents during community mapping exercises that I took part in while staying in the communities.

[11] There are many ways to describe biodiversity depending on who is assigning the meaning and why. Multiple definitions of the term result from different sets of practices and therefore are subject to contested meanings (Escobar 1998). However, it is important to note in this regard that indigenous people themselves rarely use the term 'biodiversity'. It is rather an externally-imposed concept originating from a complex network of actors, such as international organisations, northern NGOs, environmental movements, scientists and prospectors to name but a few.

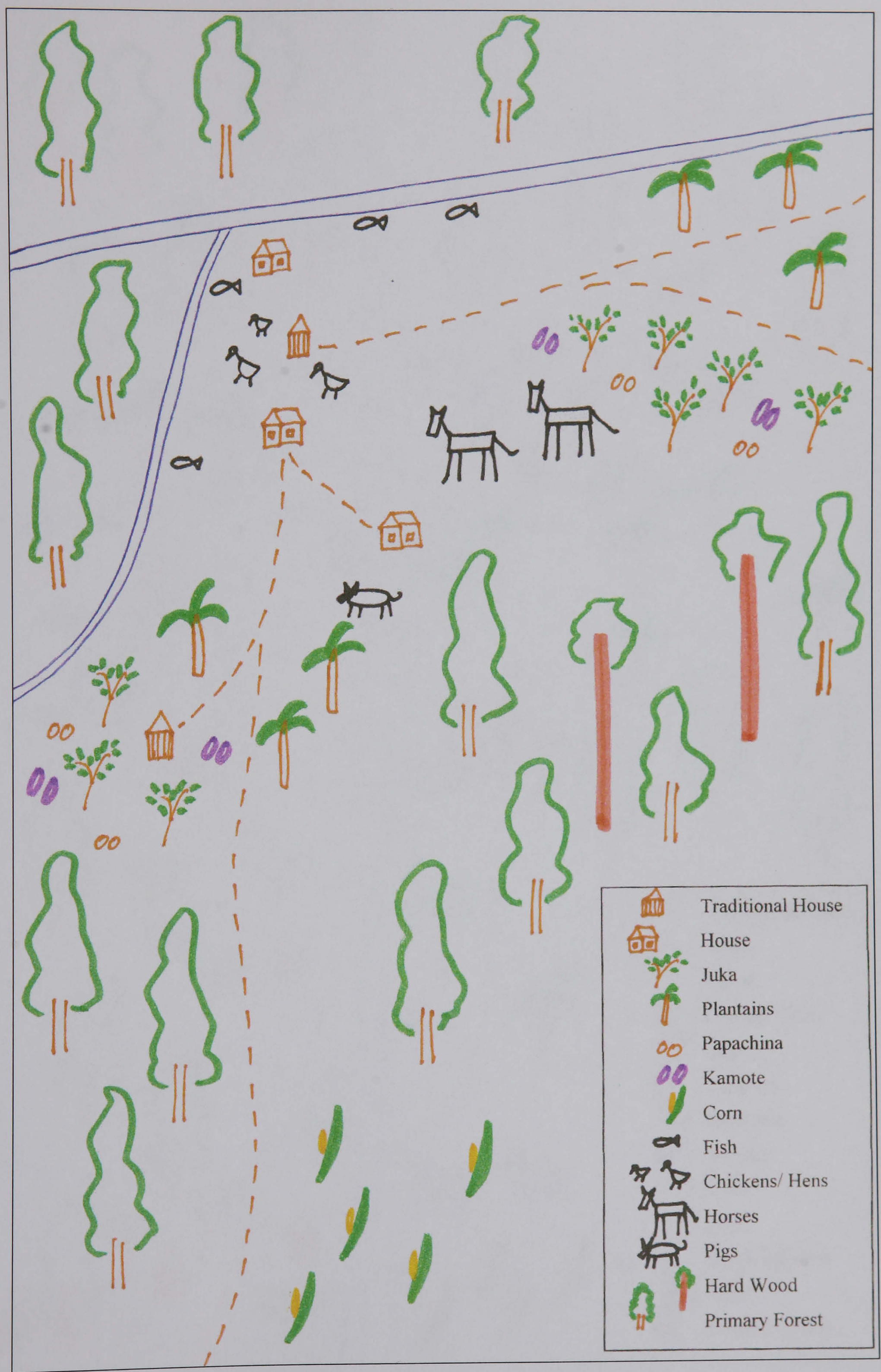
own and we do not need to search for a place to go. I hope we are able to defend our land, united here in Mukucham" (I. Mukucham 2004). Clearly forest and land are central points of reference in the articulation of place here. Further, such articulation is predicated on control and access as a key element in place definition. As Chapter 7 will further show, local senses of place are flexible and strategic too insofar as they incorporate outside protection concepts in order to combat oil-linked relations.

There is also a sense of vulnerability and externally-generated loss in the sense of place converged in the third Shuar community visited. Thus, in the case of Shinkiatam, place became a catalogue of losses: of hunted animals, degraded soils, destroyed forests, and so on (see Figure 6.6). As one resident lamented, "Since the oil companies have started working in the area, the animals have disappeared further into the forest and it is difficult for us to find game to hunt, the rivers are getting polluted so we cannot fish, and the soil is so bad so we can not grow juca and plantains as before" (Pedro Kuja 2004). Others noticed, similarly, changes in species availability and the reduced quality of catches: "Before we could catch fifteen kilos of fish every day, but now if we are lucky we get one or two kilos, and high quality fish are now rare" (P. Himpikit 2004). In response, there was a protection discourse articulated that sought an immediate stop to all 'illegal' activities and urged the Shuar to "resist all oil companies" (B. Kuja 2004; M. Tupuki 2004). As one resident explained, "we must stop the oil companies from destroying the forest and polluting the rivers, we must conserve and sustain the balance in the forest" (R. Anguash 2004; Armando Kuja 2004). Here, the sense of place was expressed in terms of sustained access to resources and land for residents, but specially those in greatest need.

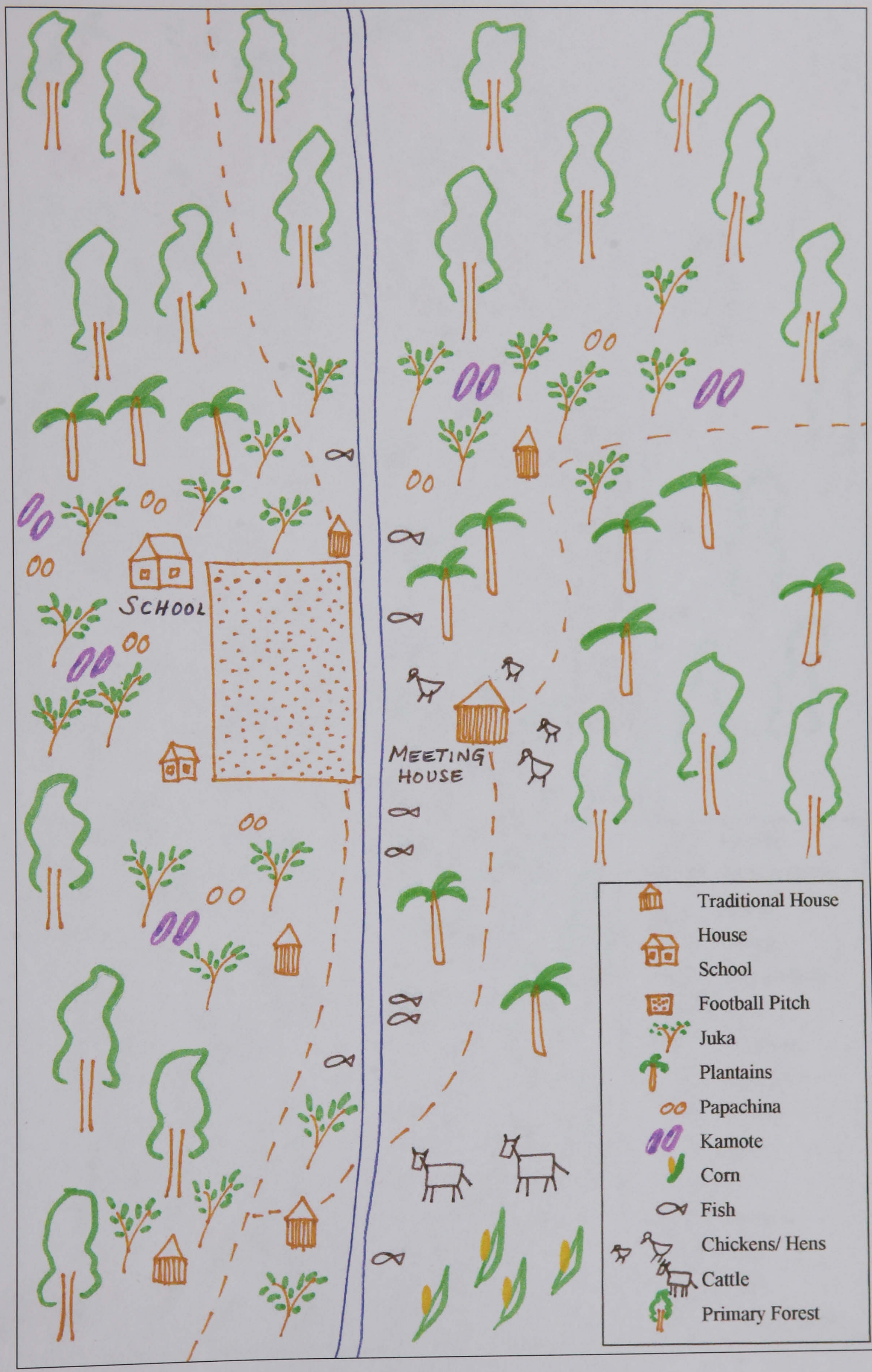
The preceding discussion has provided brief snapshots of the possible meaning of place in three Shuar communities afflicted by the outside threat of oil development.[12] All of these local senses of places had one important aspect in common--land was experienced as a common resource under threat from powerful outsiders. There were too a clear indication of how local senses of places were partly articulated as a reaction to the spread of oil-based territorialization. Given such a framing, these are seemingly implications as to how these communities react to federation-led initiatives for territorial defence and possible associated place-based opportunities.

[12] For more on local senses of place, see below.

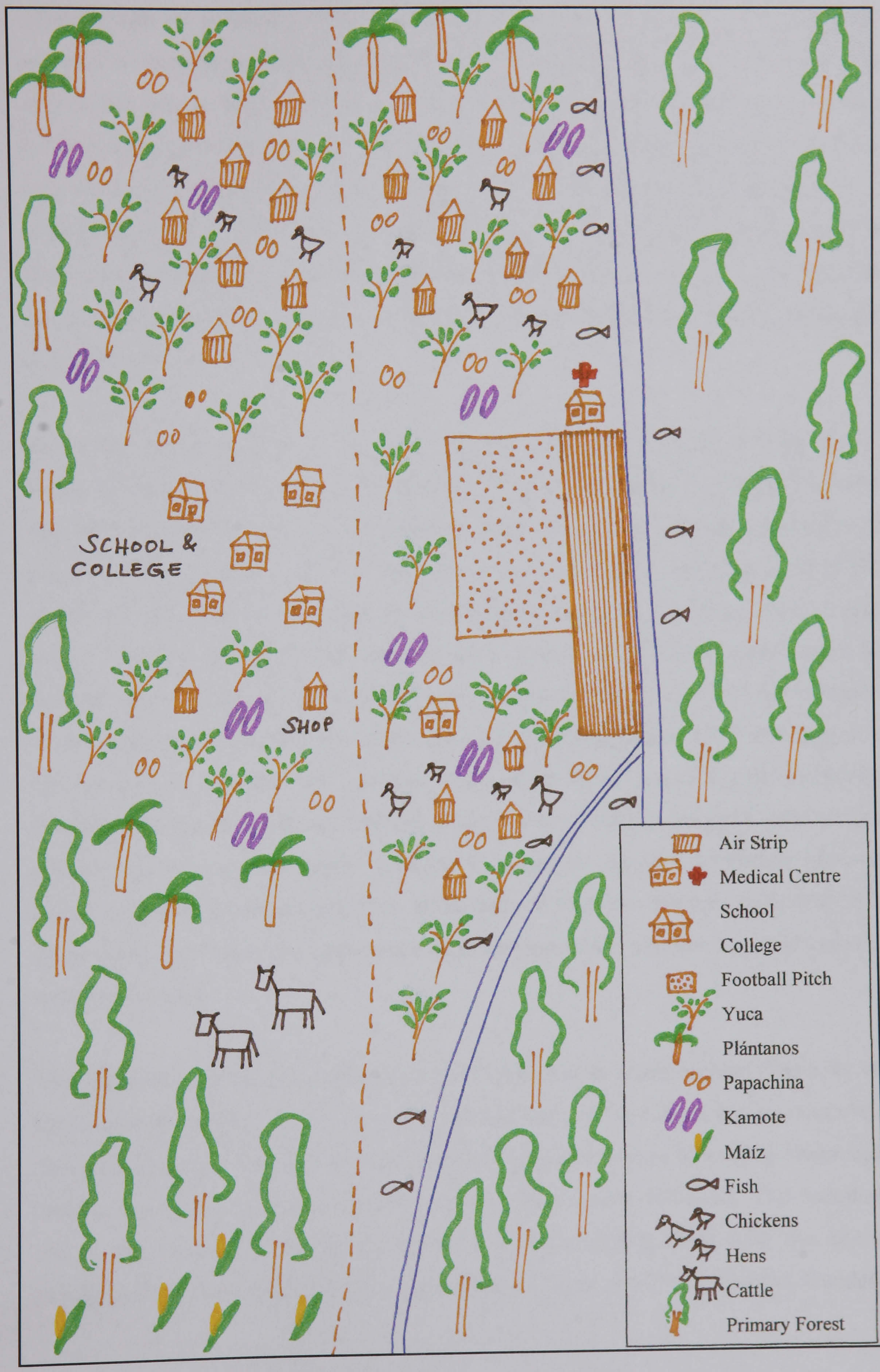
6.4 Naparuk Community Map



6.5 Mukucham Community Map



6.6 Shinkiatam Community Map



It is at this juncture that the place-based anxieties of Shuar communities seem to coincide with the political interests of Shuar federations that are keen to harness those anxieties to the political mobilisation of indigenous people. Territorial initiatives can be seen in this way as ways of 'placing culture' through political boundaries and ancestral domain claims. Hence, this section will now turn to the consideration of how the Shuar federations in particular use 'placed culture' (i.e. place-based cultural identity) as a strategy to readdress uneven power relations and access to Shuar resources and land. It thus explores the context in which a national strategy of boundary politics and ancestral domain claims interacts with an already complex local situation to produce politically novel outcomes.

The Shuar federations have strategically linked the defence of territorial rights to a firmly place-based cultural identity. This is very much related to a struggle over who has the legal right to dispose of resources that are seen to 'belong' to indigenous people. Thus, territory is based in the symbolic and material reproduction of place, which in turn is seen as a primary means of cultural identity. Shuar leaders have also drawn upon such linkages of territory and place to spell out and define Shuar territorial demands at the regional and national levels. Such an approach, which is not restricted to this particular movement but on the contrary can be applied to other movements in other regions, is of particular relevance here, as the Shuar movement has elaborated strategies for defending Shuar territory whose cultural politics are articulated around the defence of ancestral lands. Chapter 5 suggested that the formation of these strategies reflected cultural practices. Here, cultural practices are seen to be critical in determining the extent and importance of difference in the assertion of local claim to territory and land.

The importance of the place-based cultural component in asserting land claims by the Shuar federations can be seen in a document written by the *Comité Interfederacíonal*, the co-ordinating committee for FIPSE, FICSH and the Achuar federation *Federación Interprovincial de las Nacionalidades Achuar del Ecuador* (FINAE). The document was a plan elaborated during a meeting in Puyo in March 2004 with the aim of strengthening processes of territorial defence of the Shuar and Achuar people. It stated,

> "The territory is not like a market, but the base for our identity. Without our territory the Shuar and Achuar are no Shuar and Achuar. Our livelihoods, spirituality, knowledge and culture depend on our territory. We talk about a development of our territory without any external imposition, a sustainable development, with a vision for our future generations" (*Comité Interfederacíonal* 2004b: 3)

This statement is interesting since it links cultural identity and place by emphasising the cultural difference between how the Shuar [and Achuar] and 'outsiders' relate to land. Bosco Najandey, a former FIPSE President, thus explained that "the land and land-based resources the Ecuadorian state has given to the colonists and the oil companies have transformed the landscape and given them the 'right' to exploit our land and resources" (B. Najandey 2004). For these actors, a monetary transaction leads to a functional relationship to the land. In contrast, Bosco argued that land for the Shuar could never be a mere functional relationship. Rather it is a culturally-infused place where cultural integrity and identity is sustained and developed, and where "the ancestors always lived". Similarly, Luis Kuash (2003) told me, "We maintain our lands as *Madre Tierra* (mother earth) where we have lived and where we will be buried. Now, if the land does not exist, neither would we. For that reason we as indigenous people say that the land is our *Madre Tierra* and this is why we need to protect her". These representations serve to naturalise linkages between identity and place and discursively legitimise indigenous claims to territory. As such, federation leaders have articulated a political place-based cultural identity in order to make claims for Shuar territory. Here, we have a 'sense of place' that is precisely linked to the cultural identity and practices of local communities.

The importance of the place-based component to Shuar territorial defence can also be seen in the FIPSE-led project *Ií Nunké* (initially discussed above). This project clearly emphasises the need to define borders according to culturally defined understandings, unlike state-sanctioned oil-based territoriality whereby borders are defined by state officials and oil industry experts. As Manuel Najandey (2002) of FIPSE remarked about the latter:

> "The aim has been to locate new legal boundaries for state control of indigenous territories and to enable increased oil exploitation in the Amazonian region. It is therefore only ignoring the concerns of the indigenous groups that live within

> these boundaries, such as our cultural identity, traditional resource use and management and production systems."

In contrast, the delineation of territory as proposed in Shuar federation initiatives is a cultural process that is said to be based on the everyday cultural and material practices of Shuar communities. Thus, at one meeting held in Macas in March 2003, Francisco Sandu, FIPSE President at that time, explained that "the development of the project [*Ií Nunké*] arose from various workshops and assembly meetings in the communities, where we discussed the problems of acquiring legal titles for our ancestral lands and we elaborated proposals for how to defend our territory". This quote is interesting since here it shows how FIPSE leaders organised various meetings during the first phase of the elaboration of the project between 1997 to 2002 to "inform leaders and community residents about the importance of territorial legislation and the sustainable management local natural resources" (FIPSE 2003:2). One aim too was to tap into local senses of place. Thus, for example, FIPSE organised an assembly meeting in July 1999 in *Asociación de Cuchaentza* where community-mapping exercises were used precisely in order to document place-based cultural identity and the data obtained thereafter was incorporated in the proposal that became *Ií Nunké*. Thus, these mapping exercises sought to strengthen local people's claims and incorporate these into project proposals in the face of impending oil development.

Here, it is important to emphasise the discursive and political work performed by Shuar leaders in defining a place-based cultural identity. This becomes clear when it is recognised that the concept of Shuar territory does not 'naturally' emerge out of long-standing practices of Shuar communities where rights to land are allocated in terms of such things as kinship, tradition of occupation or other cultural practices. Indeed, Shuar people usually consider themselves to be members of a local community first and foremost, rather than seeing themselves as members of an abstract territory as suggested in the discourses of political identity propounded by federation leaders. For example, Bartomele Kuja (2004) from the village of Shinkiatam stated,

> "Our ancestors and their families have lived forever in the forest. The territory is more than just the land, it is the trees, the animals, the rivers, the mountains, and it is the surrounding nature and territory of our people. Our territory embraces the mountains, such as *Kutukú* and the rivers, such as *el Kanus* (Upano). And where

> we live, we identify ourselves as *Muraya Shuar* from the mountains, or *Araunia Shuar* or *Tsumu Shuar* from the lowlands" (B. Kuja 2004).

Here, we have a sense of place precisely linked to its spatial significance to *local* people. Territory is thought of in terms of an articulation between socio-cultural forms of use of the natural environment in a place-specific locality. Place is thus linked to specific rivers, *chakras*, and forests. Particular patterns of mobility, social relations, and use of the environment also mark these places, each involving a particular use and management of the territory. Territory is thus regarded as the space to satisfy the needs of the community in terms of spiritual, social, economic and cultural development. One resident passionately argued that forms of cultural practices reflect place-based Shuar understandings: "The knowledge of where to hunt, where to collect food, where our sacred sites exist, where the assemblies are held, are important for our culture and identity, as well as for local governance. The rules and regulations are simple, confirmed for the survival of our people" (M. Tupuki 2004). Territory is thereby linked to the material and symbolic importance of the land and to people embedded in highly place-specific local senses of place.

These sentiments can clearly be seen in a community map (initially discussed above) drawn by villagers in Shinkiatam as a part of a FICSH-sponsored workshop held in the village in 2004. I was part of the team that held this workshop. The map, illustrated in Figure 6.6, represents what the community deemed important locally. The map shows the forest (*la selva*) and the river (*el rio*) as central features. It also shows in accurate detail the different locations of settlements, *chakras*, and other productive activities identified in relation to the river and forest. As the map illustrates, a local sense of place is articulated through a detailed specification of how people relate to and understand the local biophysical environment. The community map thus shows the close relationship that exists between local Shuar and their land. This attachment to the land is much more than simply a physical matter, however. These places are in fact a central point of reference in both identity formation and everyday material practices. It is a place out of which Shuar livelihoods emerge through an array of spiritual, economic, cultural and social practices. Such was Pedro Kuja's (2004) illustration of the importance of land: "The land is like our parents that educate us. It gives us food and it gives us clothing. From within…there is the knowledge and science of the Shuar people. Because of this

we should protect her so she does not die". Life in Shuar territory thus meanders in the forest, along the rivers, and on the land to which the Shuar are attached, not only physically by their settlements and communication patterns, but also emotionally as they create a powerful sense of local belonging.[13]

It is only through such a perspective steeped in place that we can more fully understand the specific place-based cultural articulations of the Shuar federations. I am not trying to construct a 'romanticised' picture of Shuar villagers living harmoniously with the local environment here. Rather, it is to convey how local senses of place are created and simultaneously appropriated by Shuar leaders in wider political campaigns.

Pre-existing political and economic factors shaped this process of 'placing culture'. Take for example the case of local political boundaries. These are negotiated through claims to Shuar ancestral domains and are of considerable importance. Thus, the Shuar federations now commonly use boundaries as a strategy to 'place culture' and thereby secure officially recognised rights to ancestral domains.[14] Shuar leaders have increasingly deployed more strategic forms of identity discourse in asserting ancestral domain claims by capitalising on, yet simultaneously transcending, many place-based community-level understandings to build claims on behalf of the Shuar people as a whole. How Shuar leaders have utilised political and strategic forms of cultural identity was discussed in Chapter 5. Here, we will see how the Shuar federations have further articulated these claims through a carefully selected set of discourses that reflect potent themes of the Shuar, notably as 'caretakers of the environment' and as descendants of ancient groups that have occupied the territory since 'time immemorial'. This is a complex process that involves identity representation at various scales to achieve multiple and overlapping aims and for a variety of national, international and indigenous audiences. The complex multi-scale initiatives are crucial elements in the wider territorial defence in that they build on the emotive power of place-based cultural identity while avoiding the 'Achilles heel of localism' that both state and oil representatives seek to exploit.

---

[13] See Lawrence (2002) for a comparable account from the Philippines.

[14] Hence, this section is mainly concerned with how the Shuar federations use ancestral domain claims as a strategy to readdress unequal power relations and shifts in resource and land use towards themselves. The following discussion presents some of the arguments made predominantly by Shuar leaders in promoting ancestral domain claims.

Once again, reference to my fieldwork experience in Shinkiatam is relevant here. By the time of the community meeting that I attended there in March 2004, Bartomele and his family had become important community leaders in Shinkiatam, also with links to FICSH. Bartomele was president of the *Asociación Taisha* to which Shinkiatam belonged. "You remember when the Government recognised our territories the other year", Bartomele reminded me one day, referring to the 1999 court case against ARCO Oriente (see Chapter 5), well this recognition "is defined ancestrally and from this comes our customs, culture and identity. This is our ancestral land. Our ancestors have lived on these lands and our children will likewise do so". Bartomele continued, "This custom, our culture, our life and our identity, we can simply not live any other way. This is why the defence of Shuar territory is so important. This is our land and resources, which is related to our history [and] our history only" (B. Kuja 2004) Here, we see an effort to quite self-consciously draw upon ancestry in the *Oriente* in the formation of the specific claims related to the protection of Shuar ancestral lands. It was a sentiment that I was to hear again and again during my stay in the region (P. Tsere 2004; L. Kuash 2004).

In this context, the Shuar federation FICSH has developed a program in 2003 entitled *Componente de Recursos Naturales del Programa de Sostenibilidad y Union Regional* (PSUR) which was assisted by CARE International and financed by USAID. CARE is an international organisation that aims to "improve social and economic conditions of inhabitants in the Third World" (CARE 2003). PSUR emerged as a backdrop to the effort to legalise ancestral territory and to protect local natural resources. According to CARE (2003) it aimed to assist local Shuar communities, notably through four programmatic components, namely: 1) Income generation; 2) Social services; 3) Natural resource management; and 4) Local government strengthening. This programme formed a part of a broader effort therefore to strengthen the ancestral claims to place embedded in Shuar mobilisation.

The program was based upon various legal measures that are guaranteed under the 1998 National Constitution and the ILO Convention 169 that provided the basis for Shuar actions related to ancestral domain claims. As noted in Chapter 4, Article 84 of the National Constitution recognises distinct collective rights related to indigenous territories, including recognition of ancestral knowledge, and the right to consultation

when the state wants to use natural resources within indigenous territories. Most importantly, *Circumscripción Territorial Indígena* (CTI) provides the legal means for indigenous groups to acquire legal collective territorial titles to their ancestral lands, and the right to maintain their own social organisation, jurisdiction and authority (Article 224, 228, and 241 of the National Constitution). Finally, the ILO Convention requires governments to respect the importance of ancestral territory, in terms of spiritual and cultural values, which characterise the indigenous people's relationship with the territories and lands which they occupy and particularly the collective aspects of this relationship (Article 6 and 15).

Thus, the Ecuadorian state recognises (at least in theory) that indigenous people have the right to their ancestral lands. As such, the 2003 program draws upon these legal measures to explicitly outline a plan for defending Shuar territory and the local natural resources. FICSH stated in the 2003 project proposal:

> "The project aims to defend [indigenous] territory from a historical and present perspective, which understands and develops the tradition and the history of resistance of indigenous people as ancestral inhabitants of these territories, and their aspiration to maintain and develop a different and alternative project" (CARE 2003: 1)

This 'different and alternative project' is materially embedded in the ancestry of the Shuar people, but also draws upon new articulations, such as those related to the protection of local natural resources. Indeed, this articulation of ancestral domain claims reflected a general belief that, for indigenous people, questions of local rights and conservation are linked. As has been noted in this context with reference to indigenous politics in general, "historically, they have managed to protect their ancestral domains thereby protecting also biodiversity" (Bennegan and Lucas-Fernan 1996:156). What is important is the emphasis on 'sustainable' management of natural resources. The argument is that the Shuar must be in charge of the resources on which they depend since they are seen to be 'protectors' of local natural resources. This view is returned to in Chapter 7 in the context of a discussion of alternative community resource management. Here, it is crucial insofar as we have seen how the Shuar interpret conservation in relation to precise place-based practices and beliefs. Thus, Shuar leaders working for FICSH, for example, have stated, "While encouraging sustainable resources use, FICSH will promote local cultural identity, protect traditional

resource use and strengthen ancestral claims" (P. Tsere 2004). In practice, therefore these processes aimed to assist Shuar people to strengthen their *combined* role as caretakers and protectors of the rainforest.

Without doubt, concern for the environment has played an important role in articulating ancestral domain claims as well as protecting locally-based cultural identity in Morona Santiago. By the time of my field-based research in 2002 and in 2003 to 2004, the land that the Shuar inhabited was not merely described as that area within Ecuador that was east of the central Andes. Nor was it the 'jungle' terrain of conquest and possession of old. Rather, it was described by indigenous actors as the space in which the indigenous people had lived "since ancestral times and which is tropical rainforest" (D. Nayap 2004). This quote shows how Shuar leaders based their claims on both ancestry and the lived space in the tropical 'rainforest'. Similarly, these types of arguments are visible in a PSUR document: "Our territory contains a great diversity of plants and animals, because our traditional life has not destroyed the forest" (CARE 2003:18). Thus, the program aimed to protect Shuar culture at the same time as protecting the natural environment.[15]

This is strategically important in as much as international conservationist groups have identified places such as the *Oriente* as places of high biodiversity under threat of destruction. *Their* sense of place is here notably interpreted as a discourse centred on the idea of 'hotspots'. As noted in Chapter 2, a specific place can become imbued with certain inherent values, meanings and qualities, such that biodiversity becomes 'placed' (Wilson 1999). For Shuar leaders, the perceived need to frame ancestral domain claims in relation to the biodiverse forests underpinned federation actions from the late 1990s onwards as part of a broader attempt to gain crucial international economic and political support for their cause (see also Chapter 5). This came as a direct response to the increased interest by national and international NGOs in the plight of both indigenous people and tropical rainforests.

---

[15] Article 248 of the National Constitution states that the state has the right over biodiversity, natural reserves, protected areas and national parks. Its conservation and sustainable use must involve the participation of affected [indigenous] people, however.

Shuar leaders, moreover, recognised that their historical connection to Amazonian landscapes was strongly influenced by a history of conquest and exploitation by outsiders. As noted by former FICSH vice-president Gonzalo Nantip (2004): "The rainforest has been an attractive source of riches for the state, large companies and colonists, for example lumber, land, mines and now oil. For other groups, the exploitation of these riches has meant wealth and the source of their fortunes but for us, the Shuar, it has meant genocide". As noted in Chapter 5, this historical inequality has strongly informed the Shuar's cultural identity and their resolve to achieve some degree of self-determination via ancestral domain claims.

Thus, the main objective of PSUR is to delineate and document the Shuar customary land boundary, thereby helping to preserve place-based community culture and knowledge. As stated by Pablo Tsere (2004), "PSUR can support our communities by incorporating their domain claims into planned management zones thereby shifting power relations in the area that currently favour transnational corporations who acquire land and resources for oil exploitation". This statement clearly shows how threats of encroachment into Shuar ancestral land led to demands by the Shuar to delineate their political boundaries through ancestral domain claims. Thus, by placing their land boundary according to ancestral domains, the Shuar strategically retain access to the land. Ten communities [16] were using this strategy in FICSH-territory at the time of the fieldwork and they have had varying degrees of success in changing local power relations and discussion.

This section has briefly illustrated diverse local Shuar senses of place shaped by unequal power relations between communities and federations based on differing notions of place, but that might nonetheless provide an opportunity for political progress. It is the nature of possible opportunities that we now turn.

---

[16] These communities are all applying for a certificate of ancestral domain but still have not received one as of December 2005. However, the applications are being processed through the system with the hope of approval (R. Nunkias 2004)

6.4 Local Place-based Opportunities

The concern in this section is to examine how Shuar federation-led projects have affected opportunities to assert a local sense of place as part of a wider territorial defence strategy. Selected examples relating to 'alternative' territorial projects are used to illustrate negotiated shifts in place-based relations and how, in turn, these may relate to local place opportunities. Significantly, and building on findings from Chapter 5, federation-led projects have tended to rely on the intervention of outside organisations to assist local people to assert opportunities--with an array of associated ambiguities and tensions.

The first example relates to the PSUR project discussed above. Here, we see the strategic use of ancestral domain claims as a placing of cultural responsibility for biodiversity that attempts to take back from state agencies and transnational corporations what (it is asserted) has not properly been managed by them. The example of the project PSUR suggests that local people may need outside assistance in the bid to shift entrenched and unequal power relations between indigenous people and the Ecuadorian state and transnational corporations. And yet, the federation-led assistance did not ultimately square with local community perceptions of what needed to be done. Thus, for example, for all ten communities, the suggested domain boundary was not culturally defined in that the domain claims are limited to the IERAC recognised community-titled land and thus reflected what officials perceived the community boundary to be rather than what community residents perceived and to be in keeping with their ancestral land. Shuar villagers here have a sense of dismay, notably as the claim embodied 'modern' notions of land ownership. Yet, traditional 'ownership' rights were not transferable: as a Shuar elder from Yaupi commented, "how can you own something that lives beyond you?" (Rafael, a pseudonym 2004) The dilemma faced is that Shuar villagers recognise the threat from outsiders; as an elder stated, "once the big corporations came to take our land, we will move further back into the forest" (L. Chumpi 2004). By placing their ancestral domain claim around the community, the villagers hope to retain access to the aforementioned boundary--even if it does not really correspond with their own perceived domain.

Yet, federation and state 'allies' appeared to neglect such sentiments. During a community mapping activity held in Yaupi, for example a Shuar elder had asked FICSH and CARE representatives for a separate activity for their community land to enable the villagers to reassert their responsibility over the entire area of their ancestral lands by having it at least acknowledged in the proposed protected area. However, the 'official' map produced by the federation and CARE did not reflect this more expansive local claims. In 'placing culture' in this way, Shuar villagers have typically had to compromise their sense of place by fitting into a fairly rigid context acceptable to outsiders.

The second example relates to the *Ií Nunké* project also considered earlier in this chapter. It shows how the Shuar federations have used 'alternative' territorial initiatives strategically to defend Shuar land in a way designed to see off outside exploiters of local resources and land. Project *Ií Nunké* was thus considered to be critical to solving local place-based conflicts. As a Shuar leader stated, "It is the last hope to protect our lands and resources. Our project has stopped the oil companies from entering our territory to start exploiting for oil" (M. Vargas 2003). This project has been successful in bringing together Shuar leaders to defend a territorial vision that has also been elaborated and strengthened by the support of national and international NGOs. Such territorial clarification also weakens the ability of state and corporate agents to divide and rule indigenous people.

Yet, it is becoming increasingly clear that the upshot of such territorially-framed opposition was mixed and has generally created tensions between the federations and communities. The new ideas of a collective territorial vision articulated politically by federation-leaders in the context of *Ií Nunké* do not necessarily mesh with those advocated at the community level. As Lauro Kuja (2004) a community resident from Juralpa noted, for example, "the energies of the Shuar federation for territorial defence were directed almost exclusively towards extra-local political agendas, which in turn undermined what local people had already achieved on the ground". He referred here to how many Shuar communities had already developed community-based actions to acquire legal title to their lands as a means to hinder the entrance of the oil companies but had seen these local efforts overshadowed by federation-led initiatives. Not surprising then, community participation in *Ií Nunké* and other territorial federation

initiatives soon declined. Indeed, by the time I left Ecuador in June 2004, some Shuar community residents had already complained to me that their leaders had all but disappeared from the communities and that the outcomes of federation-led projects was generally not representing the 'true' interests of the communities.

A picture is thus emerging among the cases and issues discussed so far of leader-villager relations where the latter distrust the former on some issues- or in some localities- and support them in others. For example, Calixto Kuash (2003) of Chuwitayu stated: "There are severe problems between the communities and the federations over how to legalise Shuar land. Our leaders want to legalise it according to a territorial vision but this is exactly what the root of the conflict is. We from the communities want to acquire individual land titles which could give us the right to own the land". This statement illustrates how even though federation leaders were keen to acquire collective territorial rights and used rhetorical language to do so, others were however not that eager to follow suit. In fact, as noted, the Shuar that live near the roads or in the main towns and/or who are involved with cattle ranching activities or commercial agricultural production tend to express rather different views on how to claim rights to land. They do not articulate these claims moreover in a political language as federation leaders do. In fact, these groups were willing to use the easiest strategic tool available to them to assert their sense of place, which included the use of individual tenure mechanisms to gain control of local resources and land.

A lack of transparency and local accountability in the federations was also a key complaint surrounding the promotion of an alternative territorial vision for the Shuar. For example, these concerns were raised at an assembly meeting organised by Shuar women in Makuma in July 2002 that I attended. At this meeting, the women who spoke argued explicitly for the need for local people to fully participate in the decision-making and organisational processes of the Shuar federations. In particular, they argued that one of the major problems within the Shuar federations was the lack of co-ordination between the leaders and local communities--indeed that the former never even visited the latter. A clear gender bias was noted here: "Our elected leaders never visit our communities and nor do they consult us over the decisions to be taken. This is especially related to the role of us women. The men who are the leaders, never listen to

our ideas and opinions, and we just participate but not (through) speaking" (Makuma village women 2004).

Shuar leaders are clearly aware of these problems. In one meeting organised by FIPSE in February 2004, for example, Cesar Tupuc acknowledged that the project *Ií Nunké* had demonstrated various internal problems of FIPSE, including a lack of communication and information distribution, as well as inadequate relationships between the federation and affiliated communities. Further, he noted that these problems have had some worrying political consequences:

> "The main internal problem that FIPSE is currently facing is the lack of co-ordination and communication between the federation and our base communities, which has led some communities to create other relationships, with for example the oil companies. Our communities have felt that if they do not get fair representation by the federation, then they may get a better deal negotiating with the companies" (C. Tupuc 2002).

In fact, what was initiated as a community-based land movement has been transformed into a struggle for territory based on new types of values propounded by the externally-networked federations. The new alliances emerging from these alternative projects have not been an unmixed blessing. True, their very creation suggests a sort of political utility--a bringing together of actors to advance an indigenous territorial vision. Yet, the involvement of these different actors has prompted tension over project strategies and political intentions. Just as the oil companies indirectly influenced the structure of the projects undertaken by Shuar federations to defend Shuar territory[17], new networks have similarly influenced the structure and types of projects that the Shuar federations choose to undertake. This has often been accompanied by a fear among some Shuar communities that the political processes thus set in motion might deprive them of local-level authority vis-à-vis the federations.

Thus, the quest for an alternative territorial vision has rendered quite visible existing community divisions even as it has created new conflicts among the Shuar, even though territorial initiatives seem to be powerful tools for the Shuar to more effectively demand due recognition and respect of land and territory claims. Still, if an alternative

---

[17] That is, insofar as the alternative is defined in contradistinction to the predominant (oil-based) territorial vision.

territorial vision can be seen to be emerging (however tentatively) as part of the defence of Shuar territory, it remains to provide a preliminary assessment of the likely effects of this kind of project in terms of advancing the defence of Shuar territory. On the one hand, the promotion of an alternative vision itself reflects unequal power relations between and among Shuar communities as well as between these communities and federation leaders. On the other hand, decades of regional modernisation have resulted in differentiated cultural and economic interests among the Shuar (as Chapter 5 documented) such that the very idea of *one* alternative territorial vision may itself be highly problematic.

6.5 Summary

Several important points should be taken from the struggles to define Shuar territory and place analysed in this chapter. Firstly, it is true that the work for territorial defence by the Shuar federations has been a partial technical victory insofar as the Ecuadorian state, the courts, and international actors such as NGOs, have started to recognise their interests and problems. Most importantly, the rights of the Shuar communities to defend their land collectively have been acknowledged which has enabled the Shuar federations to use new legally-based means to try to stop the imposition of oil-based territoriality. And yet, secondly, these very processes have demonstrated dilemmas that are perhaps inevitable in the articulation of an alternative vision of Shuar territoriality, including conflict between communities over collective versus individual land ownership, problems co-ordinating regional and community-level political engagements, and the difficulties combining community mapping with broader legal and political strategies.

Indeed, the practices of the Shuar federations have revealed some very difficult problems surrounding the articulation of proposals for indigenous claims to land and territory. The struggle over territory has had implications for project outcomes and vice versa. Still unresolved, for example, is whether local community-control over processes and institutions that determine the future of their livelihoods and culture can be privileged over currently predominant federations.

In the next chapter, the complex facets of modern Shuar struggles are further analysed. Thus, we will examine contested notions over access to and control over natural and material resources on Shuar lands. We will consider how the Shuar federations have influenced livelihoods and resource access for their members, as well as the manner in which territory and cultural identity (discussed in Chapters 5 and 6) play out in the context of location-specific resources issues and battles.

Chapter 7 Conflict over Access to Natural Resources

This thesis has so far highlighted how Shuar struggles for local control and authority have been designed to combat successive ways of outsider-imposed 'development'. A complex picture has nonetheless begun to emerge in which selective engagement with outside interests and activities has partially altered the Shuar way of life, especially in the more accessible communities of the *Oriente*. Yet, the recent aggressive promotion of oil-based development has represented a new order of threat, notably in hitherto 'remote' forested areas. The increasingly sophisticated discursive and material strategies of the Shuar federations that have been documented in Chapters 5 and 6 can thus be seen to be a desperate attempt to define a clear and resolute cultural identity linked to ancestral territory in order to halt this threat. At the heart of this intensifying multi-scale struggle is the effort by oil developers to dispossess Shuar communities of land. In this chapter, then, the analytical focus is on this crucial issue of land and resource access and how the Shuar struggle needs to be understood as being contested on this vital ingredient of indigenous life.

Here, I examine how oil-based development and neoliberal policies produce particular forms of governable spaces and enclave economies characterised by political instability and economic inequality. The presence of oil companies, as part of a wider array of development projects, constitutes a challenge to community authority, inter-ethnic relations, and indigenous organisations principally through the resource and land disputes that are engendered. This can be seen via forms of political mobilisations and organising to gain access to and to control over both material and natural resources and land. Oil-based development generates differing sorts of governable spaces in which contrasting identities and forms of rule come into play.

This chapter is organised in the following manner. First, it examines how Burlington Resources (supported by the Ecuadorian state) has used new strategies to control land and resources under neoliberal policies, and how it has acquired influence and power through new neoliberal style regulations and juridical entities. Second, I explore how Burlington's 'environmentally-friendly' practices that have emerged as a response to growing international concern about its environmentally destructive practices has galvanised Shuar resistance to these practices. Third, the chapter considers how the

Shuar federations have elaborated alternative natural resource management projects in order to counter state-sanctioned corporate oil development while providing local communities with the possibility of strengthening access to natural and material resources in the region.

7.1 Oil Company Strategies under Neoliberal Rule

Previous chapters outlined how oil development and neoliberal policies supported by the World Bank and the IMF have increasingly threatened indigenous livelihoods. For its part, the state has long believed that by opening up the *Oriente* to oil exploitation it would thereby stimulate economic growth, foreign investment and national income (see Chapter 4). However, and as this section shows, with the implementation of these policies, the oil companies have attained greater power in the region whereas Ecuadorian citizens have enjoyed fewer means of resisting. This is so despite the apparent victories earned by the Shuar federations in the late 1990s, in particular the legal injunction (see Chapter 5). To appreciate this shift is to understand how the Shuar struggles that are the main concern of this thesis are always partly an outcome of wider political and economic changes.

Indigenous people have had limited power to ensure the protection of their interests during oil development. Indeed, the apparent lack of enforceability of state agreements with oil companies that aim to safeguard indigenous political interests is crucial here. For example, Jose Serrano (2004), who is working for the Quito-based human and social rights organisation, *Centro de Desarrollo, Económico y Social* (CDES), explained that the Ministry for Environment implements laws for environmental protection, but that these laws are poorly implemented and often not enforced. This is because "there is a severe lack of co-ordination between different administrative offices with environmental mandates, restricted funds with which the understaffed governmental offices must operate, and an extreme politicization of any matter concerning oil development" (J. Serrano 2004). Similarly, Mario Melo (2002) of CDES, asserted: "The Ministry of Environment is responsible for the protection of the environment, but it has been slow to implement the laws that are guaranteed under the Constitution".

These statements are interesting since they demonstrate three inter-linked issues. First, there is a bureaucratic delivery problem in implementing the laws even as law *making* itself is a very slow process in Ecuador in the first place.[1] For example, more than a decade after the implementation of the Convention of Biological Diversity in 1992, Ecuador is still struggling to implement it. As noted by Alexandra Almedia (2002) from Accíon Ecologíca, "conservation and sustainable use of the environment is not a priority of the Government". Further, while the Ecuadorian Ministry of Energy and Mining (MEM) is responsible for carefully planned oil development in the *Oriente*, it has not even evaluated the possible environmental impacts of such projects nor has it informed local indigenous organisations about the potential impacts of oil exploitation (Garzon 2002).

Second, there no dedicated focus in work on environmental protection. For example, the Ecuadorian state created an institute, the *Ecodesarrollo de la Región Amazónica Ecuatoriana* (ECORAE), to develop community management projects in indigenous communities affected by oil development in the *Oriente* (see below for an example of such a project). The main objectives, however, are to assist the *oil companies* in the development of 'community relation' strategies and to use a percentage of the profits generated from oil development to 'develop' the region-- neither objective showing much concern for environmental protection (FIPSE 2002a).

Finally, as noted in Chapter 4, petroleum now constitutes Ecuador's principal export product and main source of income (see Table 4.1). It is thus considered vital to enhance such exports for the state's overall wellbeing. However, as the Ecuadorian policy concentrates on promoting extractive [oil] industries, this choice in turn makes the country highly dependent on externally managed oil developments since it is the foreign companies that possess the capital and knowledge to undertake large-scale oil development in difficult environments.[2]

---

[1] At least, that is, in relation to environmental protection. Laws to hasten oil development have been passed more quickly.

[2] Similarly, Watts (2004) looked at oil production in the Nigeria Delta where Shell Oil has shown little concern for the environment or for the local Ogoni people such that oil development there is characterised by violence and instability. Thus, there are many conditions that Ecuador shares with Nigeria, as well as with other countries in the Third World.

The context of oil policies and development was generally described in Chapter 4. but it is important to revisit that discussion here since oil development in oil block 24 where Burlington currently holds the concession rights, became a key component of a larger state-designed scheme. As noted in Chapter 5, the company acquired its interest in the block from ARCO in 2000. However, persistent opposition to drilling by Shuar residents had prompted Burlington to issue declarations of '*force majeure*' in March 2003, which were confirmed by PetroEcuador (the state oil company) and later by MEM (CDES 2002a). This legal provision is recognition by the ministry that local opposition has prevented the companies from proceeding with lawfully-mandated exploration. Thus, Burlington took action because it could not continue with oil development in Shuar territory. Burlington, moreover, had to comply with the guidelines set by the court decision involving FIPSE and ARCO Oriente in August 1999 that were discussed in Chapter 5. Yet, Burlington argued that those guidelines actually affirmed the rights of the state and ARCO (or its successor) to carry out petroleum activities (Amazonwatch 2004c). Burlington (2004b) has thus stated that:

> "The decision does not preclude petroleum activities; rather, it provides a roadmap for consultation with FIPSE-affiliated communities. Burlington's communications with the FIPSE-affiliated communities, such as the facilitation of seminars and other informative discussions, have been and will continue to be arranged through negotiated and signed agreements with the FIPSE leadership".[3]

This quote is notably of interest here because it re-interprets the court ruling in terms of a 'road map' that serves as basis for negotiation over how oil development should proceed-- thus not whether such exploitation should occur at all. This stance is in sharp contrast to how FIPSE leaders perceived the outcome of the court case (see Chapter 5). And yet, this court ruling was always going to be only half of the story. Thus, Burlington knew that despite the outcome of this court case, and widespread Shuar opposition to oil operations, local people could not actually prohibit oil development under national law. Under Article 247 of the 1998 Ecuadorian Constitution, all subterranean natural resources belong to the Ecuadorian state. With this legal backdrop, the state could guarantee backing for oil production to proceed, if necessary with military support. Most importantly, this law has allowed the oil companies to acquire

---

[3] All quotes that I refer to in the texts are cited from Burlington's web-site since I was not able to travel to Burlington's head-quarters in Houston Texas, in the US. Hence I did not have the opportunity to conduct any interviews in person with company employees. Nor did I manage to acquire data per phone or e-mail correspondence since Burlington never returned my calls or answered any of my e-mails.

the rights to search for and exploit oil, even though they do not own the land or even the crude oil they extract. Indeed, they only possess the right to exploit the petroleum receiving a percentage of the extracted crude as payment for services rendered (Amazonwatch 2004e).

The result of the threat posed by oil development was widespread conflict as Shuar communities co-ordinated by the federations stepped up their anti-oil campaign. This struggle was visible in, for example, a meeting held in Makuma in December 2003, organised by the *Comité Interfederacíonal*.[4] As this meeting crystallizes key themes on actors and access, the discussion goes into some detail on this account. More than 500 Shuar and Achuar delegates participated in the meeting, which was the third meeting of its kind in the region designed to consider oil proposals locally. There was also involvement from other indigenous nationalities and Amazonian organisations, as well as local, regional and national authorities, such as the Ministry of Energy and Mining (MEM). The *Comité* had even invited the senior representative from MEM, Minister Carlos Arboldea, in order to show state officials the seriousness of the federations' concerns about the new policies proposed in the tenth oil block leasing.[5]

Although, the Minister did attend the meeting, he did not seem inclined to listen to the arguments of oil opponents. Carlos Arboela came across at the Makuma meeting as a typical representative for transnational capitalism. A well-dressed *mestizo* in his forties, carrying a mobile phone and a black briefcase, he spoke with grandiose words about how MEM aimed to promote local community 'benefits' from oil development. At one point, the Minister even suggested that the assembly participants 'hold him hostage' if they disagreed with the government's decision not to cancel the oil contract on their lands (*Comité Interfederacíonal* 2003).

As a key individual in the Ecuadorian state concerned with oil development, Arboela was notably responsible for overseeing the oil companies through the first stages of oil operations that is the long phase in the search for petroleum (Pachamama 2003). When the Minister spoke he appeared comfortable and confident in his role as a spokesperson for oil development in this meeting held literally in the middle of the rainforest. This

---

[4] The following discussion is based on my observations of this meeting.
[5] The tenth round of oil block leasing was announced in 2003, but it was later withdrawn hence the lack of bids placed by transnational corporations.

meeting was far away from urban centres and thus in a setting foreign to Arboela and in which people who were hostile to oil development surrounded him. Still, he confidently asserted his role as the prime advocate of oil-based development. Arboela thus stated that the Ministry welcomed this opportunity to have an 'open dialogue' with the people of Morona Santiago. "We are concerned that there has been some misinformation about oil development. We hope to clarify these misunderstandings today by stating the facts…the concern of today's meeting will be an update of our activities in this region, what the current situation is and where it is going" (Arboela 2003). This statement is of interest notably because it demonstrated themes that became apparent in the course of the meeting: 1) that the state had assumed the role as a manager geared towards facilitating access to oil development; and 2) how transnational capital functions in a country where social relations become progressively shaped by neoliberal economic reforms.

Overall, discussions during the meeting treated issues regarding oil development in block 24 and wider state policies that facilitated such development. For their part, Shuar and Achuar leaders were disturbed with how the meeting proceeded. In contrast to the statements made by the Minister, indigenous representatives questioned the so-called advantages of oil development. Thus, Luis Vargas (2003), one of the founding figures of the *Comité* and of FINAE (the Achuar federation) retorted:

> "As you know, Texaco has contaminated and polluted the *Oriente* causing problems for our brothers in the North. And the result is that they live in misery, they are sick, poor, marginalised and landless. Texaco has taught the oil companies well, creating divisions among the communities, ignoring indigenous rights and concerns, and any opposition. Without opposition, they [the oil companies] can continue their operations without a thought to ecological and social destruction they cause".

This statement by Vargas stands in sharp contrast to that of the Minister noted above. First, it demonstrates how Shuar and Achuar leaders did not want in their lands the problems that they believed had been caused by oil companies such as Texaco in the northern *Oriente* (see Kimberling 1992 for a detailed account of the Texaco case). The example of oil development in general, and Texaco's practices in particular, caused them to be quite apprehensive about the neoliberal drive to intensify oil operations in their region. Second, the statement strongly criticises oil company 'divide-and-rule'

strategies that had already been employed by ARCO Oriente in oil block 24. As noted in Chapter 5, the firm had entered Shuar territory by approaching carefully selected Shuar communities which they believed would support oil development in return for offer of 'gifts' and other 'development' assistance. It did so without the consent of FIPSE, which had in any case declared its opposition to oil development. Third, Vargas refers to the need for continuing strong opposition to that development by the Shuar and Achuar federations. Indeed, the meeting was specifically organised by the *Comité Interfederacíonal* precisely in order to strengthen the unity of the three federations (FIPSE, FICSH and FINAE) as well as to work for the territorial defence of the Shuar and Achuar people through the safeguarding of Shuar access to local resources (*Comité Interfederacíonal* 2003).

Thus, soothing talk by the Minister was set against the record of destruction and division portrayed by Vargas. Above all, Vargas places politics centre-stage, whereas Arboela seeks to depoliticise the process. This strategy of defusing conflict through 'open dialogue' and 'partnership' was clear in Arboela's words at that meeting, but was most systematically developed by Burlington Resources itself. As such, this chapter now turns to a detailed discussion of the strategies of this firm as well as the relationships between these strategies and conflict over access to Shuar lands and natural resources.

Shuar leaders fiercely criticised Burlington for its 'community relations' campaign that sought to integrate the company to Shuar communities through offers of financial compensation and/or other forms of assistance (see Figure 7.1). Thus, Burlington (2004b) asserted:

> "Although force majeure has existed throughout the time that we have been licensed to operate in Block 24, we have worked through the various federations to bring much-needed aid to several local communities. Also, as required by Ecuadorian law, we have worked with the leaders and representatives of approximately 55 local communities. We believe that the only way to gain access to these blocks is peaceably, through open and honest dialogue with the recognised representatives of the indigenous people in the area."

This quote is of interest since it shows that Burlington acknowledges responsibility for areas where it is a major investor and that the firm is investing assets and will

potentially earn profits from operations as well. However, it also demonstrates that the firm did not engage with communities even in the drafting of this declaration insofar as the firm only encouraged what they claimed to be an 'open' dialogue and 'partnership' with selected communities and individual leaders.

Figure 7.1 Burlington Community Relations

Source: Burlington Resources 2004b

The image in Figure 7.1 is taken from Burlington's own web-site in July 2004 and epitomises the firm's 'community relations' strategy. The photo shows a Shuar community that has posed with company field-workers.[6] Local people are smiling and seem comfortable with Burlington's presence. But the photo is symbolically resonant on other counts as well. First, it underscores that Burlington was actively aiming to build alliances with those communities that might be receptive to oil development in order to facilitate oil exploration. For example, in Juralpa in Pastaza (see Figure 4.5), many community members have at some point worked for *Compañía General de Combustibles* (CGC), the oil company that is operating in block 23 in Pastaza, and were therefore already receptive to what Burlington had to offer. Lauro Kuja (2003) who comes from Shinkiatam but who temporarily lives with his father and mother-in-law in Juralpa noted that, "in order to generate further support, Burlington encouraged the communities in the neighbourhood to form their own organisations, which the company supported financially. Thus, was born an anti-Shuar federation and pro-Burlington organisation". Clearly, since the company had experienced opposition to their plans for

[6] This photo is taken from Burlington's web-site and it purportedly represents one community in Shuar territory that is in favour of oil development plans. However, the name and the location of the village are not revealed to the reader nor is the image clear--it is impossible to see the faces of the people portrayed in it. This anonymity is most likely related to the fact that Burlington has entered Shuar lands without the permission of the Shuar federations, which violates the guidelines set in the court case discussed in Chapter 5.

oil operations from FIPSE and FICSH, the existence of a group opposed to the Shuar federations themselves suited it well.

However, according to Burlington (2004a), by supporting local organisations, it not only demonstrated the company's compassion for local people, but also created the support necessary for oil operations to proceed. The company, moreover, claimed it had worked with FIPSE and FICSH and other recognised federations and organisations in the area as well as with the local communities themselves (Burlington 2004b). Yet, the company was simultaneously critical of organisations such as FIPSE, even casting doubt on their right to 'represent' the Shuar people. Thus, Burlington (2004b) argued they

> "work with duly recognised or elected leadership of indigenous communities regarding the impacts of planned operations....As with any organisation, the leaders of these groups change over time. Unfortunately, it is not uncommon to encounter individuals who claim leadership of a particular organisation who in fact have failed in their re-election bids or who never originally had legitimate authority".

This statement reflects a classic 'divide-and-rule' strategy by Burlington. On the one hand, it authorised Burlington cooperation with some Shuar 'representatives' typically at village level, thereby fulfilling the claim that they had consulted local communities. On the other hand, it dismissed the claims of the federations by casting aspersions on their local legitimacy. However, Burlington had not in fact worked with the elected leadership in oil block 24. To the contrary, the company had sought to undermine the Shuar federations since they and the communities they represent were adamantly opposed to oil development that they considered to be prejudicial to local resource access and control.

Indeed, the community strategies of Burlington were strongly opposed by Shuar leaders. For example, Rosiendo Nunkias (2004), a FICSH leader stated:

> "The exploitation of strategic resources within our lands has to be dealt with integrally and discussed with the rest of the nationalities in Morona Santiago. You cannot just deal with a handful of easily manipulated people that express pro-Burlington allegiances and do not have the right to make independent claims to their lands. Nor do they have the right to define activities with them. Especially when these activities will affect the larger indigenous population."

Shuar leaders thus challenged Burlington's 'right' to approach selected Shuar communities for endorsement as a violation of the right of the federations to uniquely represent local indigenous interests. Indeed, the firm's 'community relations' strategy has involved Burlington in actually signing agreements with local Shuar--something that only the Shuar federations were permitted to do in law. However, Burlington (2004b) stated it had maintained "a broad base of contacts to ensure that consultation takes place at all levels. Burlington is voluntarily complying with a recently enacted Ecuadorian law intended to promote an open and transparent dialogue with indigenous communities and federations". A consultation process is generally required in Ecuador, so Burlington's commitment is nothing more than an agreement to follow the law, a minimal standard expected of all oil companies. As noted in Chapter 4, Article 84 and Article 88 of the 1998 National Constitution and Article 15 of ILO 169 specifically state that indigenous people must be informed and consulted about the exploitation of non-renewable resources found in their territories and receive compensation for environmental and social harms caused by these projects.

Second, Figure 7.1 is also symbolically resonant in that it suggests how Burlington has pursued a strategy of bestowing 'gifts' on carefully selected Shuar communities near sites where oil has been found. At the heart of this process of gift giving is a corporate desire to settle local access for oil development amicably (and inexpensively) with residents. Burlington (2004a) thus asserted that they would "provide appropriate compensation for property used or acquired from indigenous communities in accordance to applicable law, regional custom or as mutually agreed". This measure was designed as compensation for letting the company undertake work locally. However, 'compensation' has a long history in tandem with oil development in Ecuador (CDES 2002c; Garzon 2002; Wray 2000). A standard procedure was followed in these situations. Thus, once a target community was identified, Burlington would send 'community relation officers' to the locality to offer 'gifts' and 'development' assistance such as the building of communal houses and schools, free plane rides, as well as the donation of school materials, solar panels, tin roofs, money, candies, medicines and foodstuffs.

Shuar residents were certainly not naïve about such gifts. Patricio Himpikit (2004) of Shinkiatam village noted, for example, one such corporate visit:

> "Burlington representatives attempted to 'visit' our community to negotiate exploration arrangements directly with us rather than approach the federation [FICSH]. They said we would receive a new community house, school materials, medicines, solar panels and money. However, we know that these are just empty promises and will never be implemented. This is why we stopped the Burlington's employers from entering our community"

This statement refers to how residents in Shinkiatam literally stopped Burlington representatives from entering community land in 2002 with the aid of machetes, sticks and other tools. Burlington's representative had no other choice than to turn around and abandon corporate plans for negotiating oil operations in the vicinity. However, where access was not blocked in this manner, by distributing gifts, the company's operations could often start unhindered in recipient communities, such as in Iñiayua, Kusutka and San Juan (CDES 2002c).

In effect, access to selected monetary and other resources was offered in return for local oil access. Hence, the firm's 'upbeat' take on such assistance. Burlington (2004a) asserted typically that they aimed to 'assist' indigenous communities "in the development of specific community support plans designed to facilitate access to needed goods and services and otherwise contribute to community development in ways beneficial to the communities". Assistance was a central plank in that support. Thus, in Figure 7.1 for example, there is evidence of a communal house and foodstuff that the firm claims to have given to the villagers.

Burlington staff members sought to woo Shuar villagers in other ways as well. On more than one occasion, for example, I saw Burlington representatives entering Shuar communities in large jeeps or even airplanes, carrying mobile phones and wearing smart clothes. Such calculated displays of wealth and power were designed to show community members what they too might be able to afford one day if they permitted oil development to proceed. Manuel Maiche (2003), a young Shuar who had lived in Puyo for some time, spoke excellent Spanish, and was actively involved in *Arutam*[7]--a

[7] Arutam was formed by a group of ex-militaries, which had participated in the war between Ecuador and Peru. In Ecuador there are several such contraband groups that are working in the *Oriente*. Many of them use 'guerilla-style' methods such as heavy weaponry, camouflage clothes and secrecy in order to either support the oil companies by threatening local communities or oppose proposed oil development by assisting local communities.

paramilitary group that has assumed a role of opposing oil development--criticised this presentation of a seductive new lifestyle:

> "My opinion has changed after having profoundly analysed the policies and strategies that Burlington is applying. I was working with the company for one year and I have seen how they try to manipulate us by visiting communities and showing us what we could acquire if we just signed the contracts for oil development".

Such displays of grandeur also emphasised of course that Burlington was a powerful actor with good political and economic connections. Implicit here too was the idea that it was not likely to dispense patronage to unsupportive local people. For a corporation investing large amounts in oil exploitation, these gestures and gifts were incidental expenditures, but for socially marginalised and inexperienced Shuar communities, they were potentially enormous windfalls. Burlington (2004b), for its part, maintained that:

> "These efforts have been conducted in an open and honest manner, and we have sought to obtain input from all parties to cooperatively develop a plan for access to the area. We believe that today, through their official representatives, a majority of the indigenous people within the blocks are receptive to petroleum activities".

However, those people the company approached were among the most socially and politically vulnerable in the region. Thus, for example, they tended to live in Puyo and Macas far away from the rural communities where opposition to oil development was fiercest. Indeed, they had become strongly influenced by life in the towns where they resided in order to make a living. As such, they seemingly could be easily swayed by an array of consumer goods, such as stereos and mobile phones, into supporting the Burlington stance on oil development.

Burlington clearly put much effort into carefully selecting the community residents with which it would work. Target communities typically lacked the capital necessary to buy essential goods such as rice, salt, soap, machetes, rubber boots, and petrol. With help offered by the company, however, the communities could buy the material goods they deemed necessary and gain rapid tangible improvements in their living standard. For example, Alfredo Pitiur (2004) of *Organización Shuar del Ecuador* (OSHE)

suggested that "by negotiating with Burlington, we can develop our communities and gain economic growth and an income necessary to improve our livelihoods".[8]

The benefits to be acquired from such co-operation are not to be gainsaid. Thus, Pedro (a pseudonym, 2004), put it this way when we talked one day in Puyo, the provincial capital of Pastaza: "We in the Shuar communities must work, we need to work for a living, to be able to educate our children and to offer them a decent upbringing. We want to develop". This Shuar man looked smart in his new haircut and carrying a briefcase and a mobile phone. He had lived in Puyo for several years and it was a long time since he had visited his family's community located near Makuma in Morona Santiago. Young Shuar men, such as Pedro, are now often well-educated, excellent Spanish speakers, and used to the workings of the outside world. They have thus been prime candidates for assuming leadership roles in working with the oil companies. They were thus prime targets for Burlington's community relations employees, and were indeed often amenable to what the company had to offer. Marko (a pseudonym, 2003) thus stated, "By negotiating with the oil company I have been able to live well here [in Sucua], I have a mobile phone, I can use the Internet and eat in restaurants. Now my role is to help my community to acquire the same things and to develop economically". This quote is important since it shows how just like Burlington's people, Shuar leaders such as this increasingly have access to monetary and other material resources and when they visit Shuar communities they come across as the face of 'modernity'. However, it is also important to note that Marko had not been to the community in several months, and some of his interpretations about what community members really wanted in terms of development and oil conflicted with what I had just heard from Shuar residents.

If the promise of access to material resources helped to undermine opposition to Burlington in some quarters, often Shuar people pursued different ways of acquiring community development assistance without turning to this controversial company. For example, Manuel Maiche (2003) explained that the only way to prevent those Shuar residents who wanted community development from negotiating with the oil companies

---

[8] As noted in Chapter 5, OSHE had attempted to strike a deal with ARCO Oriente to receive compensation for suggested oil development in oil block 24. The organisation has maintained the same approach since then. Shuar leaders both within and outside FIPSE's and FICSH's organisational structure repeatedly condemned this tactic.

was to provide them with alternative sources of funding: "I think that the community, in order to maintain its firm position of not permitting the entrance of the oil company, needs to find self-sustaining aid. That is the only way to oppose the oil companies". Having earlier been tempted by provisions from the oil companies, Manual was bitter: "So I feel that we are being deceived [such that] we can't continue working for oil development". Burlington would simply not give fair compensation to the Shuar in return for winning access for oil development, he believed, and would not provide fair community development assistance either. This statement is especially interesting since the Shuar federations had criticised this individual for having worked with Burlington before. Francisco Sandu (2002) a former president of FIPSE, thus stated at a meeting in Shinkiatam in September 2002: "Manuel Maiche is not allowed to either participate in this important meeting or to enter FIPSE territory since he has worked for *la Compañía* [Burlington] and provided them with vital information about our actions". When I asked Manuel why he had done so, he replied that Shuar like him needed employment: "I think that each person has to look for his own work, for human subsistence, in an individual manner" (M. Maiche 2003).

Given these mixed Shuar views, it is hardly surprising that Burlington believed they were inculcating positive ideals in the local communities, even 'civilising' indigenous 'undeveloped' societies by assisting them in the elaboration of development projects and the provision of new work opportunities. Hence, the company aimed to assist indigenous communities through specific projects that would contribute to local development in ways considered beneficial by the communities themselves (Burlington 2004a). This logic is profoundly positive and morally propitious--at least when seen from the company's point of view.

Indeed, moralising was a key element in the firm's community relations' strategy to smooth access to Shuar lands. For instance, Burlington argued that they managed their operations in Ecuador (and elsewhere around the world for that matter) in a socially responsible manner. This commitment led them to strive to understand and address the needs of indigenous people in Ecuador. Burlington (2004b) thus stated,

> "As corporate citizens, we are committed to managing our operations in Ecuador and elsewhere in the world in a socially responsible manner. This commitment

> has led us to strive to understand and address the unique needs of the indigenous people in Ecuador."

This statement is interesting because it seems to suggest that Burlington need not have bothered to consult locally, but had done so voluntarily out of a sense of 'corporate social responsibility'.

Burlington's strategy of 'buying consciousness' also played on the distrust of some Shuar for the actions of the federations that purportedly acted on their behalf. The contribution of endemic local poverty and such distrust proved fertile ground for Burlington's corporate social responsibility strategies. Thus, Burlington's employees conjured up the image of immediate improvement in the livelihoods and material services of these communities--in short, that the company would single-handedly drag them out of poverty. Further, there was apparently no other way to acquire economic progress except by negotiating directly with the company. These corporate promises were then favourably compared with the 'paltry' efforts of the Shuar federations themselves. Some Shuar readily accepted this Burlington argument and hence were happy to accept such compensation. Thus, as Estaban Anguisha (2003) of Naparuk observed, "Our federations never visit the communities. They live far away in the towns, in their fancy flats and with good food and clothes. They receive funding from international organisations for community development projects, but we never see the money. Many families have now turned to the oil companies to receive help for community development projects". Similarly, Jorge (a pseudonym 2003) stated that "the oil companies have offered us compensation for the oil operations and our federation has offered us nothing. We are poor and our community needs to develop and for this we need money. This is why we have been thinking of accepting it [the money] from the companies".

Still, most Shuar residents expressed steadfast opposition to oil development and the kind of assistance Burlington offered. For example, Luis Kuash (2004), a prominent Shuar leader from Ijinti advocated a different kind of development from that favoured by Pedro, Marko, Jorge and Manuel. For Luis, development was premised on an altogether different access regime: "To the foreign companies, the oil companies, we say, No! We have to pursue our own form of development…The best school for me has been the jungle… We want assistance, but without conditions, on our own terms. We

are going to develop with our own model". To him, money-making activities or involvement in the market were not as important as defending the Shuar way of life as well as access to the land and resources associated with that life. Luis added: "Money, yes, is necessary in order to organise, travel, communicate, and unify our people. But we have everything we need to survive in the jungle. We only need money for training and communication" (L. Kuash 2004). Similarly, Luis Chumpi (2004), an elder from Mukucham, explained that the Shuar could and ought to pursue means of community development that did not destroy their culture or their resources, and that Shuar themselves had to work for their own community development, rather than depending on outside support. He stated, "We, as the base communities, are the ones that have to do most of the work in the areas of health, education and development. And we must also be watchful of the oil companies or other companies that always want to try to use us in the future. We have to be prepared" (L. Chumpi 2004). Here, then, there is a clear rejection of Burlington's approach as well as a call for Shuar unity predicated on a non-oil-based set of access and economic relations.

The multifaceted response of Shuar leaders and residents has occurred against a backdrop of wider political and economic changes. Thus, the state's role has decreased under neoliberal rule even as the oil companies have gained more power and taken on more of a role as a conflict manager in the region, notably with their 'community relations' approach. However, the story does not end there. Burlington has acquired a further role, namely that of 'protector' of the local environment and upholder of 'sound' use of natural resources. This new role has been assumed to the extent that the state has retreated from its formal responsibility as the protector of the environment on behalf of the Ecuadorian people. The next section assesses this apparent transition in how environmental governance is conducted in the *Oriente* and how technical and productivity aspects rather than environmental and social considerations are emphasised in the process of asserting corporate-led 'sustainable development' and access to natural resources in Shuar territory.

7.2 Contesting Corporate Environmental Governance

The oil companies' influence in contemporary Ecuador is not limited to visible means of restructuring the power relations between different actors, as described in the previous section. Indeed, the very analytical and methodological tools that the oil companies and their partners use (including the classificatory systems they establish in pursuit of 'sustainable development') represent an exercise of power. These tools serve to create a new cognitive mapping of Amazonian nature and society, as well as state and people, through new forms of knowledge production and institutional collaborations. They are powerful set of discourses of rights, norms and 'truths' of global ecological rationality that seek to build upon and replace prior discourses that have notably involved indigenous people (Escobar 2001; Watts 2004). At the same time, however, that the oil companies are seeking to appease those concerned with improving the conditions of indigenous people and their environment, they are even more concerned about their ability to bring on new oil ventures in the region.

How firms such as Burlington seek to diffuse conflict over access to natural resources surrounding their operations through skilled discourses about indigenous rights and sustainable development is central to current struggles over Shuar territory in oil block concession 24. Inaccessible by road, the concession was located in what the company called 'primary rainforest', by which it meant an 'untouched' and 'uninhabited' place. According to the company, it has not been easy to develop the 'assets' found in block 24 (Burlington 2004b).

There are various reasons why this has been the case. First, since the fields were located in a sensitive biophysical environment, their development would require special measures, including industrial hygiene, waste management and environmental permits.[9] Second, demonstrations against the oil company in various parts of Ecuador made it all but impossible for Burlington to commence oil exploration given the ease with which opponents could disrupt oil work--even with military protection (Amazonwatch 2004a; Pachamama 2002b). Third, protests at Burlington's headquarters in Houston, Texas,

[9] Environmental permitting entails activities that require permitting from environmental regulatory authorities which are to be identified well in advance of activity and authorisation sought from the appropriate authorities. Industrial hygiene includes potential health hazards, which will be identified, risks assessed and controls introduced to ensure that these are maintained as reasonably practicable (Burlington 2004c).

against the company's strategies compelled them to have a re-think (Amazonwatch 2004b, d; The Houston Chronicle 2004; El Universo 2004; New York Times 2004). Burlington executives were concerned about further demonstrations and associated bad publicity if they continued with oil exploration in block 24 (Burlington Resources 2003). After all, the firm had already been forced to declare a state of '*force majeure*' in the block despite it having spent close to a million dollars in community relations there (Amazonwatch 2004c). As of late 2004, operations thus remained suspended while Burlington negotiated with the Shuar federations over how to proceed.[10]

It is in this politically fraught context that Burlington's promotion of a 'green' image can be seen to be invaluable to corporate efforts to build up a 'legitimate' presence in the region. Thus, Burlington claims it has started to adopt socially and environmentally friendly policies unlike other oil companies, such as Texaco. For example, Burlington (2004a) stated:

> "Burlington is committed to protecting human rights and the environment, and to minimising impacts to native lands and cultures…We are applying appropriate operating practices to minimise employee and contractor interaction with indigenous communities, where desired by the indigenous communities, to help preserve cultural integrity…and apply appropriate operating practices to preserve or prevent disturbance of sacred, historical or other culturally sensitive sites in native territories"

This statement portrays Burlington as being committed to protecting the environment and human rights by using 'appropriate operating practices' thereby 'minimising impacts' on both land and people. Even more intriguing, Burlington purportedly aims to protect sacred, historical, archaeological or other culturally sensitive sites while operating in indigenous territories--in effect, apparently acknowledging that the land 'belongs' ancestrally to the Shuar.

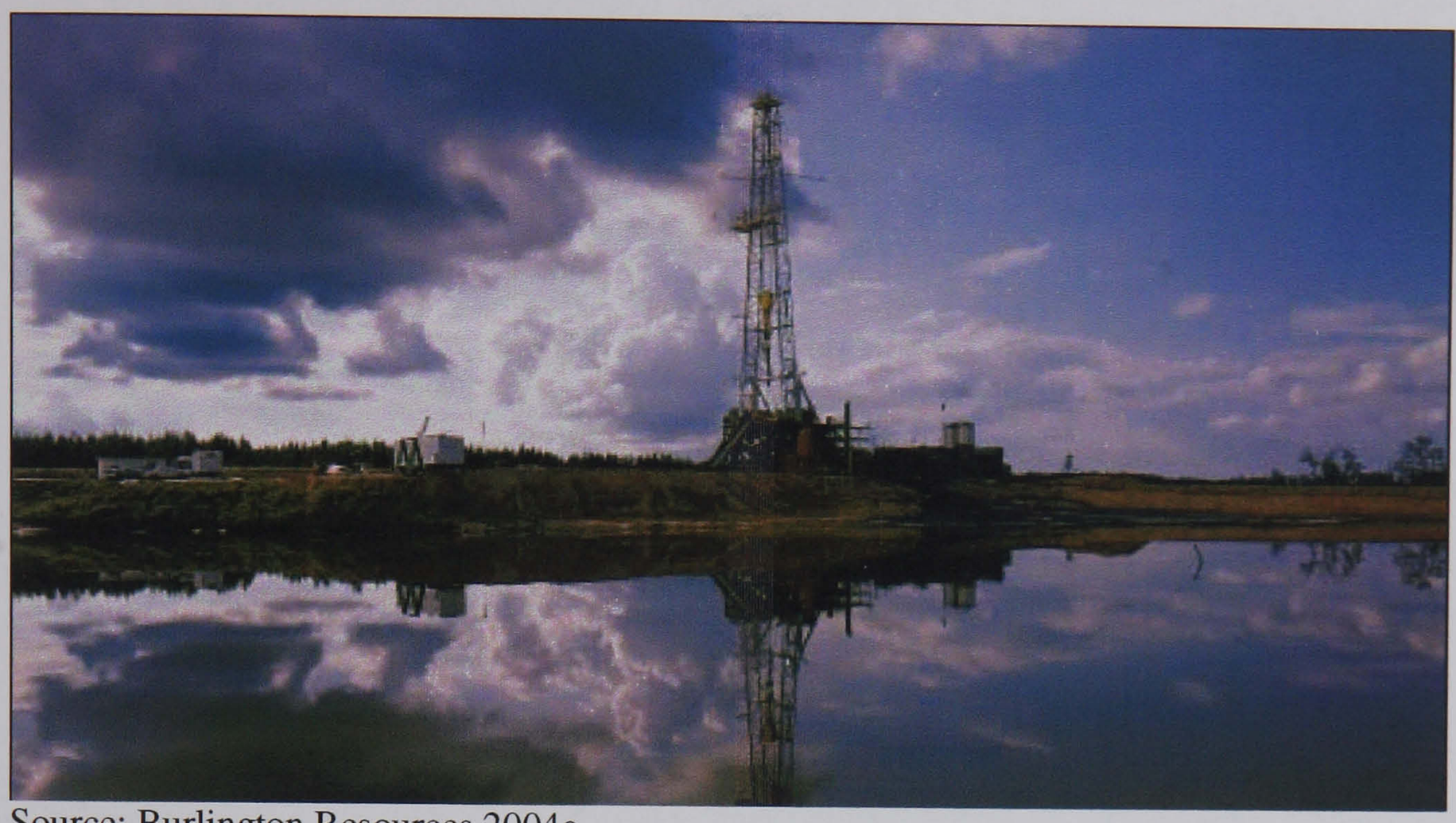
In 2004, Burlington published a document designed to support these grand claims that catalogued the firm's "Environment, Health and Safety Management Systems" (Burlington 2004c). Technological innovations and environmental concern are portrayed as being central to both the management policy and infrastructure needed to

---

[10] Even in 2005, Burlington has not been able to initiate its operations in oil block 24 due to on-going Shuar resistance.

discover, develop and pump petroleum. The glossy tabletop document is packed with compelling images about the firm's 'safe' oil operations.

Figure 7.2 Safe and Responsible Operations



Source: Burlington Resources 2004c

Figure 7.3 Environmental Management Practices

Source: Burlington Resources 2004c

Two such images are reprinted here as Figures 7.2 and 7.3. Figure 7.2 demonstrates the technological aspects of oil operations: heavy equipment, sophisticated technology, elaborate infrastructure, and considerable labour power that is used to install these facilities in the first place and that are needed thereafter to conduct oil operations in the tropics. These operations are performed moreover under an 'environmentally friendly' programme tailored to the challenges that the Amazon poses with mountainous terrain,

intense rainfall and fragile ecosystems. Figure 7.2 provides evidence of this 'sensitivity' insofar as it portrays a well site as a compact and self-contained unit, encompassing 'only' a few hectares, and one that has neither destroyed the natural environment nor apparently interfered in ecological processes to any noticeable extent. Burlington's oilrig stands alongside a river and behind it there are trees. The only humans in sight are small-sized individuals at the base of the oilrig and the only artefact of a human presence is the well site itself. Figure 7.3 provides an even better illustration of how Burlington claims to operate in a number of environmentally sensitive areas while practicing 'sound environmental stewardship'. The forest here seems dense and vibrant, and it appears teeming with life. In the centre of the photograph we can see a stand of young trees planted at the behest of Burlington to offset forest loss linked to nearby site clearance. There are no signs of bulldozers, uprooting or trampling. There is not a human in sight and no signs of environmental destruction.

Indeed, the company maintains that they have even been recognised as a leader in environmental management and conservation. Burlington (2004c) proclaims generally: "We are proud of our record of environmental protection. As is customary in our business, we operate in a number of environmentally sensitive areas, and we are determined to practice sound environmental stewardship…We are determined that environmental protection will remain a priority for Burlington". The message is clear as far as Burlington is concerned: oil development and environmental conservation can go hand in hand.

Yet, careful analysis of these images and associated corporate pronouncements reveals a subtle effort to marginalise the Shuar residents. By depicting the rainforest as being without people, Burlington focused the viewer's attention on how its operations are a technical feat--that is, to work efficiently in an 'environmentally friendly' way. The challenge was thus to extract crude from the rainforest without unduly disrupting the sensitive ecology of the region. This green focus came at a time when global concerns over the environment increased, notably linked to the emergence of environmental NGOs (Bryant and Bailey 1997; Goldman 2004). The latter have emphasised in particular the adverse effects of petroleum contamination. For example, Alexandra Almeida (2002) of *Accíon Ecologíca* stated that "Burlington is one of the largest transnational corporations in the world. Its operations in Ecuador have caused severe

negative impacts on the people and on the ecosystems [in the Amazon region]". By stressing an environmental discourse in reply, Burlington has sought to find a new legitimacy for resource extraction by asserting the claim that it is ideally placed to sustainably manage the local resources that it has access to. Thus, insofar as the virtues of 'environmentally-friendly' and 'clean' technologies are emphasised, social, political and environmental concerns of indigenous groups living in the region are obscured.

The 'erasure' of indigenous politics from Burlington's vision of 'sustainable' oil development runs through the company's 'imagining' of the area. Thus, it was noted before that the map of oil blocks in the *Oriente* (see Figure 4.2.3) presents only a handful of towns, the *Oleuducto Crudo Pesado* (OCP) pipeline, and the parameters of block 24 as well as the other adjoining oil blocks. I suggested above that this map was developed with only one purpose in mind--namely to outline in purely technical terms the existing or potential areas for oil operations. Indeed, we can see how space becomes defined as nothing more than a series of oil block concessions. Yet, when viewed again in the light of the concerns of the current chapter, the map in Figure 4.2.3 is, above all, important for what it leaves out. Here, the rainforest is abstract, drained of people, and hence a space dislocated from sociocultural surroundings and historical contexts. This spatial reproduction is a crucial part of Burlington's efforts to claim authority over Shuar territory and the resources within it. The idea that the rainforest was 'pristine' and 'untouched' perpetuated the illusion that there were no competing claims over the space designated ahistorically as 'block 24'.

Yet, the rainforest contained in block 24 is of course neither devoid of humans nor a 'pristine' wilderness. Today, the federations suggest that 50,000 Shuar live in the region (P. Tsere 2004, B. Nayandey 2004).[11] Further, as noted in previous chapters, they have long played an integral role in creating the 'untouched' rainforest. In Burlington's 'environmentally-friendly' re-visioning of the *Oriente,* Shuar claims to land, forest, *chakra*, and sacred sites are simply obliterated. And yet, my fieldwork emphasised again and again to me the worked-over 'nature' of this tropical setting. On our way to one *chakra,* for example, about one days walk from Shinkiatam (in March 2004), Carmela Kuja pointed out the plants and fruit trees she had planted along

---

[11] As discussed on page 84 above, national and regional population estimates vary widely depending on the source consulted. However, and as suggested there, the most plausible figure is 50,000.

way. The first night we camped in a small *plátano* plantation that she and her husband, Pedro Kuja, had planted a few years earlier. On the second day, we collected *papachina, kamote,* and *juca* in the *chakra.* I then understood that what the Shuar call the forest is very much a humanised environment where local communities actively shape the places, the species content, the distribution, and diversity of the forest through planting and selectively managing different vegetation. The local Shuar communities manage, live and use resources in the directly surrounding area and transform that area irrevocably in the process.

Shuar residents are keen to stress their role in 'managing' the rainforest well. For example, Pedro Kuja (2004) argued: "We defend and care for the forest, by birth and by inheritance, in a sustainable way. We are caretakers of the forest". Carmela Kuja (2004) added, "We maintain our lands where we have been born, where we have lived and where we will be buried. With our traditional ways of managing and using natural resources, we have shaped the forest and cared for it". Such representations serve to legitimise access claims to natural resources and land and explicitly create a linkage between cultural identity, place and the local environment. They also flatly contradict the images put around by Burlington Resources.

Shuar representations also stress a low-impact form of economic activity that boosts self-reliance. This was drawn to my attention by another conversation whilst on fieldwork. I sat by the fire in front of Luis and Hilda (Luis's second wife) Mukucham's house in Mukucham (in February 2004). Insect life buzzed in the forest, and a score of children were gathered around. Luis had just returned from a few days of hunting in the forest to bring home food for the family. He showed me the animals he had killed and said, "I do not need anything. I have everything here. I kill a *guanta* and I have enough to subsist on, to sell, and I have money. A few days ago I made a stool out of *chonta*, sold it, and now I have money to buy what I need. I don't need the oil company to subsist and to survive" (L. Mukucham 2004). Hilda likewise conveyed her fear of the changes oil would bring: "It is possible that our community will not exist here in the future" (H. Mukucham 2004). Hilda was born near Mukucham and had lived there her whole life. She was one of the founders of the community, one of its eldest members, and had spent very little time away from it. Her words, along with many of the other community members, conveyed their fear that oil development would lead, in the long

term, to the disappearance of their way of life as well as the forest upon which that life depend.

> "The government should listen to the interests of the indigenous people. It is trying to destroy the forest and the sustenance of our people. It knows very well that we sustain ourselves by hunting, and we are not like those people that eat what is stored, that have a market. Our market is the forest. The government knows this very well, and wants to send the oil company, only thinking about money, and it wants to destroy the lives of our people" (H. Mukucham 2004).

This observation is of interest to our discussion of oil-related environmental access struggles because it exemplifies how oil exploitation has especially posed a threat to the Shuar women because of their disproportionate dependence on communal resources.[12] As the women are the ones responsible for cultivating and preparing food, it follows that they would be very concerned about potential threats oil could have on these activities. Shuar women, such as Hilda Mukucham, were worried that oil development would degrade subsistence resources, and advocated maintaining a more traditional lifestyle. They did not need therefore the kind of development that the oil companies offered. Likewise, Carmela Kuja (2004) said, "We do not see any protection for nature in the oil development plans and above all, we are not interested in anything from the companies… because we can survive without them". As with other women, she seemed acutely concerned that oil development would destroy their people, both culturally and physically, through disease, depletion of the resource base and violence and conflict among the Shuar thereafter.[13]

Faced with these sorts of powerful arguments, it is hardly surprising therefore that Burlington has devoted considerable resources to its pro-oil campaign. Indeed, Burlington's focus on the environment went hand-in-hand with the attempt to control the resistance of Shuar residents, notably through the presence of the Ecuadorian military in the region as a mean to secure oil operations.[14] Thus, while the firm

---

[12] This observation has been a key theme in 'feminist political ecology'; see Rocheleau et al. (1996) and Sundberg (2004).

[13] It is interesting to note here that the Shuar women I interviewed generally used more resonant language than the rhetorical language often used by Shuar men.

[14] For example, the Ecuadorian government has used military threat to start oil activities in the Kichwa community of Sarayaku, Pastaza province, despite the community's long-standing opposition. In response, Sarayaku has declared a state of emergency (in March 2004) and mobilized their communities to prevent the incursion of Argentinean company CGC, Burlington Resources, and Perenco (Sarayaku 2005).

emphasised its environmental 'compassion' as this section has illustrated, it simultaneously concealed its part in setting local communities against each other, thereby also weakening the political and organisational capacity of the Shuar federations. However, as of late 2005, the firm's oil operation is officially halted while it negotiates with FIPSE and FICSH over plans for oil development.

Burlington Resources has thus mounted a sophisticated if controversial material and discursive campaign to transform the landscape of access in Shuar lands. In response, Shuar communities have promoted, with the assistance of the federations, community resource management schemes designed to (re)assert control over and management of their natural resources and lands, as discussed next.

7.3 Alternative Community Resource Management

The recent global resurgence of the local community scale as a key organising principle of natural resource management notably linked to 'alternative' community development projects has been reflected in Shuar action over territorial definition as well as access to and management of natural resources (see also Peluso 1995; Hodgson and Schroeder 2003). The issue of territorial defence was discussed in Chapter 6. There, it was suggested that Shuar residents had pursued various community mapping projects based upon an alternative territorial vision from the hegemonic state vision. This alternative was reflected in how the Shuar relate to land, how place was defined, and how relations on the ground were understood in terms of rights and control of resources. Here, I will examine two projects (that were not discussed in Chapter 6), which have been developed in Shuar territory since the end of the 1990s, in order to better appreciate how Shuar groups have sought to safeguard their access to resources and land against the kind of threat posed by Burlington Resources as discussed above.

Although quite different, the two projects are nonetheless interesting for their similar intent--that is, they are becoming central to Shuar communities in their efforts to counter dominant representations of property regimes and land use practices that marginalise them. In the process, these projects have opened a terrain on which struggles over access to resources and land are linked to questions of cultural identity, land rights, economic choice, and power relations. These projects do not represent all of

the projects that Shuar villagers are pursuing but illustrate some key issues in the Shuar 'fightback' against Burlington Resources.[15]

Let us begin by examining the first project I observed which is related to the development of Shuar controlled and managed ecological reserves. Over the last decade, some Shuar have been active through the federations in lobbying for the protection of land rights, cultural preservation and locally ('sustainable') defined development. In the process, they have linked up with other indigenous activists as well as allied external actors in calling for the creation of a new category of reserve land that would be preserved for the exclusive use of indigenous groups. The central principle adopted here was that local indigenous groups would manage natural resources effectively if they have a direct stake in the work and other benefits such projects generate.

The formal recommendation adopted by participants in the annual assembly meeting of FICSH in December 2003 nicely exemplifies the assumptions involved here:

> "FICSH support the declaration of certain communities as ecological areas. Demarcation, titling and allocation of lands for these reserves will be promoted as a way to protect Shuar lands and resources from grabbing by the State and the oil companies. Consideration should be given to frameworks based on traditional systems, to facilitate negotiations between the federation and our base communities for sharing and co-management of a range of resources."[16]

In particular, Shuar leaders demanded that protected status be granted for critical resources including areas to be set aside for biodiversity protection which were now under threat from oil development. However, the implementation of these proposals has been quite limited so far in practice and when it occurs, has been carried out on an incremental community-by-community basis.

One such initiative came in February 2004 when the Shuar community of Mukucham and the state-linked institute *Ecodesarrollo de la Región Amazoñia Ecuatoriana*

---

[15] Out of all the projects the Shuar federations have developed, only those which showed significant difference were compared and contrasted to examine the validity of general patterns in local claims to resource access through 'alternative' resource management projects produced during the time of fieldwork.

[16] The following discussion is based on my observations of this meeting.

(ECORAE)[17] organised participatory exercises--meetings and resource management schemes to create an ecological reserve in the area. As the official partner, ECORAE had signed up to an agreement with this local community including precise conditions of access to specific areas on the part of both external and local actors, adopting the premise that community residents hold the rights to their lands and practiced 'sustainable' resource management (ECORAE 2004). That project was notably about safeguarding local environmental access in order to promote sustainable agriculture and natural resource use for local residents.

This project thus addressed a growing problem in Mukucham. As a result of increasing oil exploitation in the nearby region of Napo, local food supplies had declined since the rivers had become polluted and the animals had fled further into the rainforest. For example, one villager typically remarked, "life is harder now, there is less fish to catch and less animals to hunt, we must stop the others destroying fish and animal habitats" (Angel Mukucham 2004). This quote expresses a common experience of fishing and hunting as depleted resources. Even as late as the end of the 1990s, fish and animal species were abundant locally and were providing a stable livelihood. Yet with increased oil exploitation in nearby areas, villagers in recent years rarely found animals to hunt or an adequate volume of fish to catch. Therefore, the ecological reserve was seen to offer protection to an 'endangered way of life', as one community resident responded positively:

> "The forest here is special…as it contains lots of plant and animal species that we need for food, shelter and health. We must conserve and maintain the balance of our [biodiversity], however not totally prohibiting fishing or hunting in this area because this is our source of survival" (G. Tseremp 2004).

This quote is interesting because this was the only instance during my research that a local community resident used the term biodiversity. Undoubtedly, this was due to the fact that he had been exposed to the term during training sessions and activities with ECORAE. Here, the biodiversity discourse was critical to the process since it helped to validate scientifically local claims that emphasised socio-economic stability, resource access and habitat protection as the way in which local livelihood interests and biodiversity could be secured.

---

[17] ECORAE is a state-linked institute that works to develop ecologically-oriented projects in the *Oriente*.

Thus, the community needed secure access to local resources--something that 'ecological' project pledged to do. Gonzalo Tseremp, a community resident as well as co-ordinator of the project, strongly believed that the project would generate new opportunities for community empowerment and sustainable livelihoods. He argued that "although the project has taken some time to get use to, we feel more comfortable now with the idea of creating an ecological reserve and we are highly motivated with the project"(G. Tseremp 2004). Similarly, Francisco Canellos (2004) said "it seemed strange to ring-fence our land and resources at first, but now we have realised that the project is a way to protect our traditional livelihoods and local resources." Thus, resources and livelihoods were the principal element that allowed people to discuss and negotiate local claims in the context of an 'ecological' reserve.

Yet, how did ECORAE leading the resource management scheme incorporate local claims into the proposal for the 'ecological' reserve? Exploring this question illuminates how this type of state institution reacted to the assertion of local access claims. The initial stance toward local people was established through a complex series of negotiations held in Mukucham itself between ECORAE and community representatives in March 2004 (see Figure 7.6). The meetings were the only time when local communities were given the 'legal' right to negotiate changes to the proposed resource management zones. ECORAE thus asked for various meetings to be held in communities such as Mukucham as it considered them a key opportunity for community input. This resulted in the assertion of a local claim based on hybrid knowledge gathered from several sources to form best practice. This claim was a starting point for the negotiations.

This preliminary consultation was a highly important move. Gonzalo Tseremp (2004) observed, "ECORAE is here to help us to create an ecological reserve to enable us to defend our traditional culture and livelihoods". The way in which the project was devised was therefore as novel as the contents of the project agreement itself. Thus, these meetings were a general forum for local people, and yet, as we will see, their process and context could affect whether some claims prevailed over others. The initial assertion of local claims through the proposed ecological reserve was shown to reflect local influences, albeit keeping with uneven micro-powers between ECORAE and local

people. How though, did this process of local input change in the course of subsequent meetings held to elaborate the project?

Figure 7.4 Community Meeting in Mukucham

Source: this Author 2004

Crucial here was how local access claims were related to both the format and content of the meetings. In terms of the format, the meetings involved the presentation of legal and scientific knowledge claims albeit using local cultural examples to justify claims for the protection of the area. One ECORAE representative thus evoked strong cultural metaphors--for example, using the metaphor of house construction to emphasise the need for careful planning through zone identification: "If you build a house you need to plan it: where to build it and where to get the material from. This is our approach, we researched where to put things, this is the point of managing a protected area" (Jose, a pseudonym 2004).[18] He closed by evoking a sense of natural retribution for bad management with a 'mother earth knows best' example, linking local people to sustainable resource practices. This talk set the scene for ECORAE to explain permissible activities in local management zones based on official scientific experience. Local people were finally invited to comment during the open question forum. Here, community residents sought to assert further their own knowledge claims, notably though careful questioning of the reasons for the placement of specific zones and their boundaries.

---

[18] This ECORAE representative wished to remain anonymous. This anonymity is most likely related to the fact that ECORAE had a negative reputation in the region since it had assisted the oil companies in the development of the 'community relations' strategies.

Various social dynamics affected the meetings. Thus, officials on the panel were relatively young and their informal friendly style encouraged questions. Even with this informal style, though, uneven power relations between ECORAE representatives on the one hand and local people on the other created a communication gap. It fell to some local leaders to address this gap by drawing out local concerns. Hence, what was locally asserted within these meetings was already filtered through existing power relations associated with power and position *within* the community.

During the meeting, many residents focused on the context of the project and were concerned with the location and size of the core zone. In many cases, they also did not accept the concept of the protected area itself. For example, one resident said during one meeting, "if this area is closed to all types of fishing then where will we fish, we cannot go to other areas since we do not have canoes" (Alfonso Mukucham 2004). Instead, where there were habitats that needed protection, residents defined practices that would not damage them. Indeed, in this local discourse of protection there was clear provision for the practices of local people. This was done either by suggesting that the core zone be reduced in size or that it be altered to allow livelihood activities to continue.

At the meeting, some residents were so angry with the plan that they got up and left the room so as to give a clear meaning to their critique of the proposal for the ecological reserve. Jorge Taki (2004) the brother of Luis Mukucham, for example pointed out that "we thought the project was developed in order to help us defend our livelihoods against the oil company [Burlington Resources] but it has become a tool for ECORAE to gain control of community land and to restrict access to our traditional agricultural and hunting grounds". Here is revealed scepticism of the motives of outsiders whenever it comes to discussing new access and livelihood arrangements. Indeed, there was even the suggestion that ECORAE was using this project to further its own 'devious' plans to access local resources. Underlying all of this was the fear that this project might restrict Shuar access to game within traditional hunting areas.

The idea that entire communities should be ring-fenced inside an ecological reserve, thereby prohibiting residents from accessing the land particularly alarmed some residents. Milton Jambis (2004) thus said: "The project was developed to safeguard our

traditional cultural practices and livelihoods, however, now it seems like it [the project] will limit our access to some areas where we used to go to the *chakra* and do our fishing". Similarly, Pedro Mukucham (2004) stated, "it feels like we were selling our livelihoods and source of survival". Indeed, this aspect of the project did not generate much enthusiasm among community members.

The response from one of the proponents of the new ecological reserve was that the project had little choice if it was to ever hope to succeed: "It is necessary to establish an ecological reserve in order to safeguard access to our land and resources now when the oil companies are coming. This is the only way!" (G. Tseremp 2004). Indeed, when another proponent was challenged about drawing hard boundaries around key Shuar water and land resources, he gave a telling response: "The oil companies are drawing boundaries all around us. If we do not make clear where to and how to draw boundaries around our natural resources and land, those people will draw them for us" (F. Canellos 2004). This statement is also of interest because it is a reminder of what the Shuar federations FIPSE and FICSH felt was an ongoing difficulty of oil-related development as Burlington sought to tempt villagers away from seemingly less lucrative alternative livelihood options. Thus alternative projects such as this one must always address not only the usual divisions within communities confronted with complex new access and livelihood arrangements, but also the glittering 'gifts' of the pro-oil lobby that seek to capitalize on such divisions.

Diverse points thus emerge from the first 'alternative' resource management project discussed in this section. First, the ecological reserve contains detailed prescriptions of local activities allowed and not allowed in the management zones. Thus, it has a strategic role in setting the frame for policies that affect how local people ought to act and how their claims to resource access are received. It is also a means to prevent access to their lands by others such as the oil companies. Thus, the ecological reserves "will be promoted as a way to protect Shuar lands and resources from grabbing by the state and the oil companies" (F. Canellos 2004). As such, and in principle, the project ought to have dovetailed with community worries about why oil exploitation posed a threat to local resource access and livelihoods (L. Mukucham 2004).[19]

---

[19] During the meetings, however, the ECORAE representatives did not explore this further thereby avoiding any direct confrontations between the groups over oil development.

Second, the sheer array of meetings between local people and ECORAE provided several opportunities to assert local claims to resource access and land. However, it required time for villagers to discursively form meanings and positions at the local level because the project required a new way of thinking in which local people were little practiced. Where they were able to assert claims, it was the institution that integrated them with other scientific claims in the planning process thereby reducing any local challenge while increasing the likelihood of project acceptance within a broader set of power relations. Thus, the local government was pleased with the plan "because you can see it comes from the people" (L. Shakay 2002).[20] The plan legitimised local claims in a way that was acceptable to local government. However, this was not considered to be an equally good plan by all community residents.

Thus, the experience of the alternative project captured in Figure 7.4 demonstrated at a minimum that there was a great debate both within the community and with ECORAE over different aspects of the project. These divisions, in turn, posed complex problems for those seeking to implement it. On the one hand, the success of projects based on sustainable use and management of land and resources depends heavily on the initiative and involvement of local people. Without such support, community-based natural resources management schemes are usually doomed (Lawrence 2002). On the other hand, the various elements of the project raised concerns about the loss of cherished local practices insofar as fixed borders sought to 'rationalise' highly complex resource-use patterns. The drawing of boundaries- whether around ecological reserves or communal forests- is thus as much a cultural exercise as a political and economic one.

Let us now turn to a second case of the federation-led 'alternative' resource management project. This one has been designed to safeguard local environmental access in order to promote 'sustainable' agriculture and natural resource use for local residents. Although different from the first project, this scheme has also sought nonetheless to safeguard local access to natural resources even as it looked for ways in which to boost Shuar livelihoods. It too, though, promoted divisions between communities, federations and state institutions as well as within communities about the meaning and direction of 'alternative' schemes.

---

[20] This quote is extracted from *Plan de Accion Plantitario* (FIPSE 2002b).

Project *Plan de Accíon Communitario* was developed in 2002 by the Shuar federation FIPSE in conjunction with FIPSE-affiliated Shuar communities. This project was supported by *Proyecto de Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas y Negros del Ecuador* (PROPEDINE), which is a nation-wide program (funded by the World Bank and IFAD, the International Fund for Agricultural Development) that offers to support indigenous organisations, and has the specific purpose of offering 'ethnodevelopment' or 'development with identity' (CONDEMPE 2004; Radcliffe 2001b; PROPEDINE 2002).[21] FIPSE organised community mapping exercises, public hearings and resource management schemes to elaborate proposals for the project (for example, as seen in Figure 7.5 and 7.6). The federation-led project was designed to "improve infrastructure, social and productive development and to strengthen community development, and incorporate residents' own vision of development" (FIPSE 2002c). Further, it entailed a substantial restructuring of local Shuar social and economic relationships by 'modernising' and commercialising traditional agricultural production in order to increase household incomes. This would, for example, be achieved by boosting market-oriented activities centred on cattle ranching and/or the sale of products from the *chakra*, such as coffee and cacao, in outdoor markets in Puyo or in Macas. Federation leaders maintain that "the active transformation from subsistence to a market economy has resulted in socio-economic advantages for the Shuar…At the same time this has given us [the Shuar] a sense of economic security and pride in our own achievements. Through cattle ranching and cash crop production, we [the Shuar] have found a way to prevent the Government from expropriating the land and the oil companies from accessing our resources" (D. Nayap 2004). Thus, and if seen from this perspective, these strategies have indeed been successful in securing access to land and resources.

In addition, the aspiration here is that the hoped-for benefits of modernisation will strengthen the federation itself as socio-political vehicle for demanding change, access to resources and a more prominent role for Shuar [leaders] in rural development and governance. In one of the proposals produced by FIPSE (2002c), it is stated that the project aimed to "improve the life of indigenous communities...and to access land and to finance subprojects of their own intervention...with regard to existing cultural values,

---

[21] With a $50 million budget, PROPEDINE gives indigenous organisations control over resources that are used for capacity building in indigenous organisations, regularisation of land and water tenure, rural investment in private and collective assets and institutional strengthening of the (governmental) Council for the Development of Nationalities and People of Ecuador (CONDEMPE) (CONDEMPE 2002).

development vision and governance". Such demands are given cogency by the fact that the federation's management of modernisation reflects an attempt to demonstrate a Shuar ability to manage modern administrative methods in a style similar to state programs. If they are able to administer rural modernisation through their own organisations, state-led development is no longer justifiable. The decision to foster commercialisation of agricultural production thus has clear rationalities. Modernisation seems a necessary response to the realities of land subdivision, state agricultural development projects, colonisation and oil-based development.

Thus, it is important to recognise how the federation's proposals, encapsulated in the second project, are influenced by wider cultural and political logics as well as socio-economic pressures. The Shuar federation-led project can be seen as simply the latest instalment in a much larger process of frontier development. Indeed, as far back as the mid-1980s, the situation began changing rapidly due to privatisation of land and increased colonisation. Deepening commercialisation of the rural economy has heightened the Shuar's need for land (and thus land titles) as security for loans. As the Ecuadorian state belatedly began to make specific policies regarding indigenous ownership of lands, it also became a central strategy of Shuar federations to maintain control over land and natural resources (see Chapter 6). In particular, this has become a common strategy since oil-based development has heightened tensions over land and resources in the area, and since the Ecuadorian state has increased its bureaucratic and military capacity to dispossess those without appropriate legal documents.

Hence, there is the perceived need for new market linkages and Shuar administration as part of a strategy of cultural survival that nevertheless challenges the viability of traditional indigenous agriculture. At the heart of the matter here was the issue of reliable access to markets and hence monetary income. However, when villagers have attempted to sell their goods in these markets over the years, they have been seriously disadvantaged--at the mercy of highly variable markets on the one hand, while being squeezed financially by powerful networks of merchants who purchase their goods on the other hand.[22] Given the distance and difficulty involved, the lack of reliable information on current commodity prices, and the difficulty of acquiring the money to

[22] Prices are controlled by traders so that a lack of competition between them means that villagers never reap the economic benefits from normal competitive demand and supply relations.

purchase vehicles to transport the goods themselves, Shuar villagers have hitherto had little choice but to simply accept prices offered to them. Miguel Anguash (2003) from the village of Ijinti, asserted, "We often lack the money necessary to get the products to the town [Puyo]. Still, if we would be able to sell our products there, we would not make enough profit to even pay for the bus fare".

Indeed, these problems were quite visible when I accompanied community residents from Naparuk to the markets in Macas and Santiago. Since the villagers lacked the financial means to rent or buy a vehicle even though it was far to the nearest town, it was already difficult for them to sell the goods they had produced at the market. Oswaldo Anguisha (2003) of Naparuk put it: "We want to sell our products in the markets but we have neither the money nor the transportation to take them [the products] to the nearest road and then into the towns". Due to the lack of basic communication and infrastructure in their village, they also had difficulties in receiving information about current market conditions and commodity prices. Meanwhile, as a result of 'dollarization', unemployment in the towns climbed thereby changing local consumption patterns since many people could no longer afford to buy the products sold in the markets. There is also the broader political economy of Ecuadorian debt and structural adjustment, characterised by declining commodity prices and economic crises (see Chapter 4) that clearly undercut economic experiments such as the one associated with the second alternative project being considered here.

To appreciate the nature of the challenge in project *Plan de Accíon Communitario* it is important that we briefly revisit an earlier discussion on how many Shuar have long related to their land in terms of differentiated places. The project considered here is a visible contrast to traditional production systems used locally and based upon a mix of horticulture and fishing. That these activities are carefully gendered and intricately linked to place has inevitably meant that the new project has disrupted existing perceptions held by some residents. Rosa Himpikit (2004) of Shinkiatam thus noted: "The federation and some institutions have developed this project that is supposed to develop new means to safeguard our natural resources and land, but it [the project] counteracts our traditional practices and what it means for us to be Shuar". Thus, as was noted in relation to the village of Shinkiatam, household production and consumption practices often still play an important role in deciding how to manage and use local

natural and material resources as well as in forming ideas about overall Shuar cultural identity. Based on many conversations held with Shuar villagers, it became clear to me that this was a relationship based on a perception of the Shuar as 'traditional' indigenous farmers and 'sustainable' resource managers.

How, then, are these practices represented in the FIPSE-led project and which ones predominate? The community mapping exercises instigated by the federation (and supported by PROPEDINE) in FIPSE-affiliated communities revealed certain patterns. For example, Figure 7.5 demonstrates how resources with a market value were associated with livelihood knowledge. They tended to be a discrete resource, such as cacao or corn, with an identifiable market. These resources tended to be seasonally available in large volumes and were usually dependable. They also provided a cash income and associated activities were relatively easy to undertake. As one villager (2003) stated, "Everyone is involved in corn production, children and my wives included. We all go to the fields with our machetes and enough *chicha* to last for the whole day". Here, strong interest in the economic benefits to be derived from a substantial restructuring of local Shuar social and economic relationships by 'modernising' and commercialising traditional agricultural production was widespread and reflective of a prior linkage to the market. This modernisation would be achieved by boosting market-oriented activities centred on the sale of products from the *chakra*, such as cacao or corn, or from logging for hard wood and the clearing of forest for pastures.

Meanwhile, important knowledge featured on the map--here illustrated with reference to Figure 7.6--related to subsistence and life-enriching activities, such as resources that provided food and shelter.[23] These included resources such as *juca* and plantains, and *palmito* and balsa trees. Asserting the claims to these resources through mapping ensures that local people have basic security. It thus shows how the community residents' experiences were reflected in the role certain resources were said to play locally. For example, knowledge claims and practices about hunting and general forest types were the presence of a male elder. Indeed, he knew thirty different species of trees in the area and could identify them through botanical characteristics: "The trees

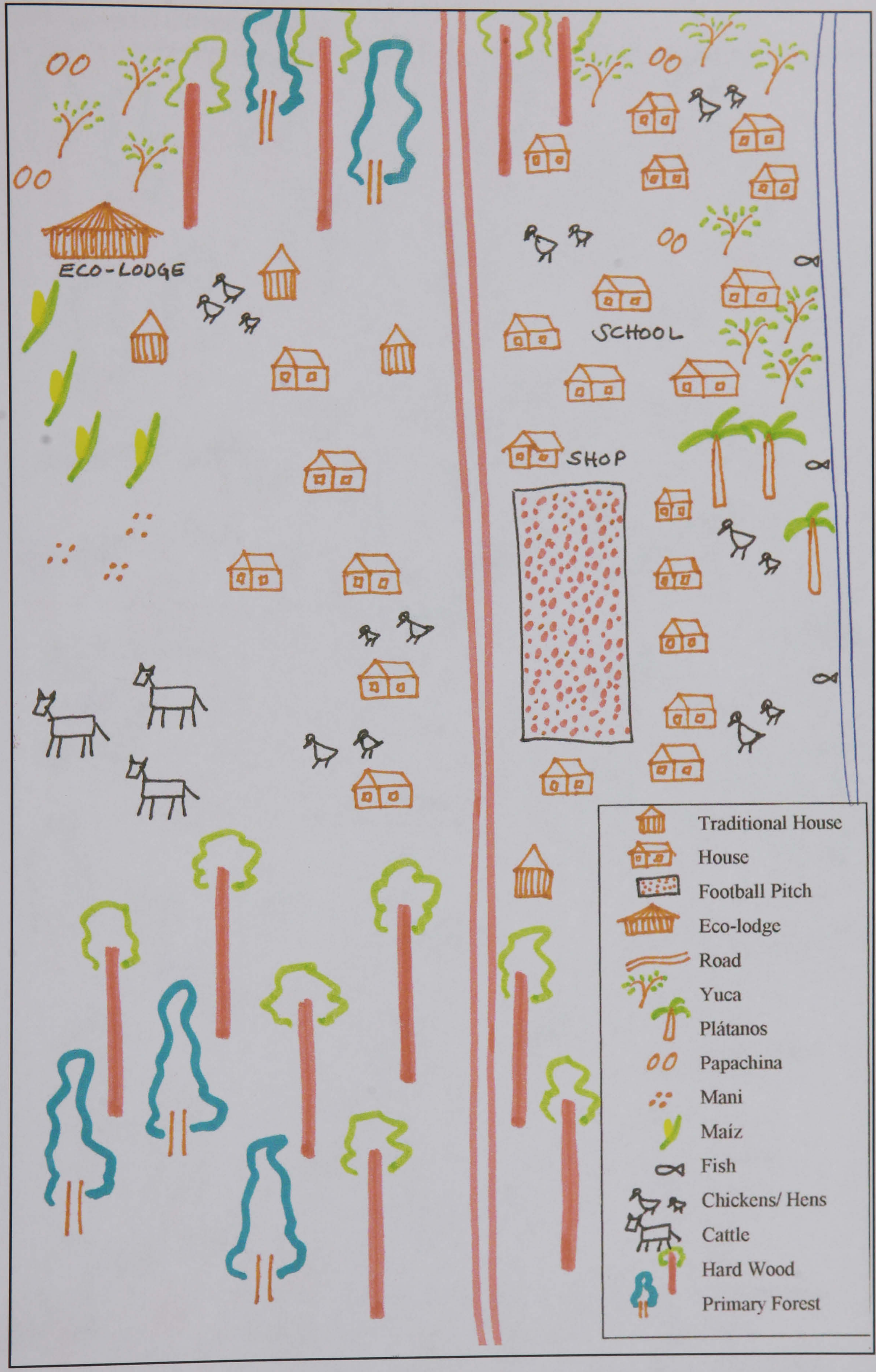
[23] This map was initially analysed in Chapter 6--notably, illustrated as Figure 6.5. Once again, reference to Mukucham community map is important in order to distil local people's claims to resources.

have different characteristics and are of great important for the survival of our people. They provide building materials, shelter and food. For example, we use the *chonta* for building canoes, we can eat some parts of it, and we use it for building our houses." (L. Mukucham 2004). The depth of knowledge reflected in this quote also seems to indicate the importance of this resource (especially to the men who collect it). Further, the assertion of resource access in map form also featured diverse sorts of 'cultural knowledge', such as how to use spiritual practices. These may include those resources used in 'traditional' celebration, such as *chicha* made out of *juca*. Asserting these cultural claims in general through mapping exercises was seen to ensure that local people have the flexibility to adapt to any changes in access to resources by providing for a safeguarding an *array* of specific resources.

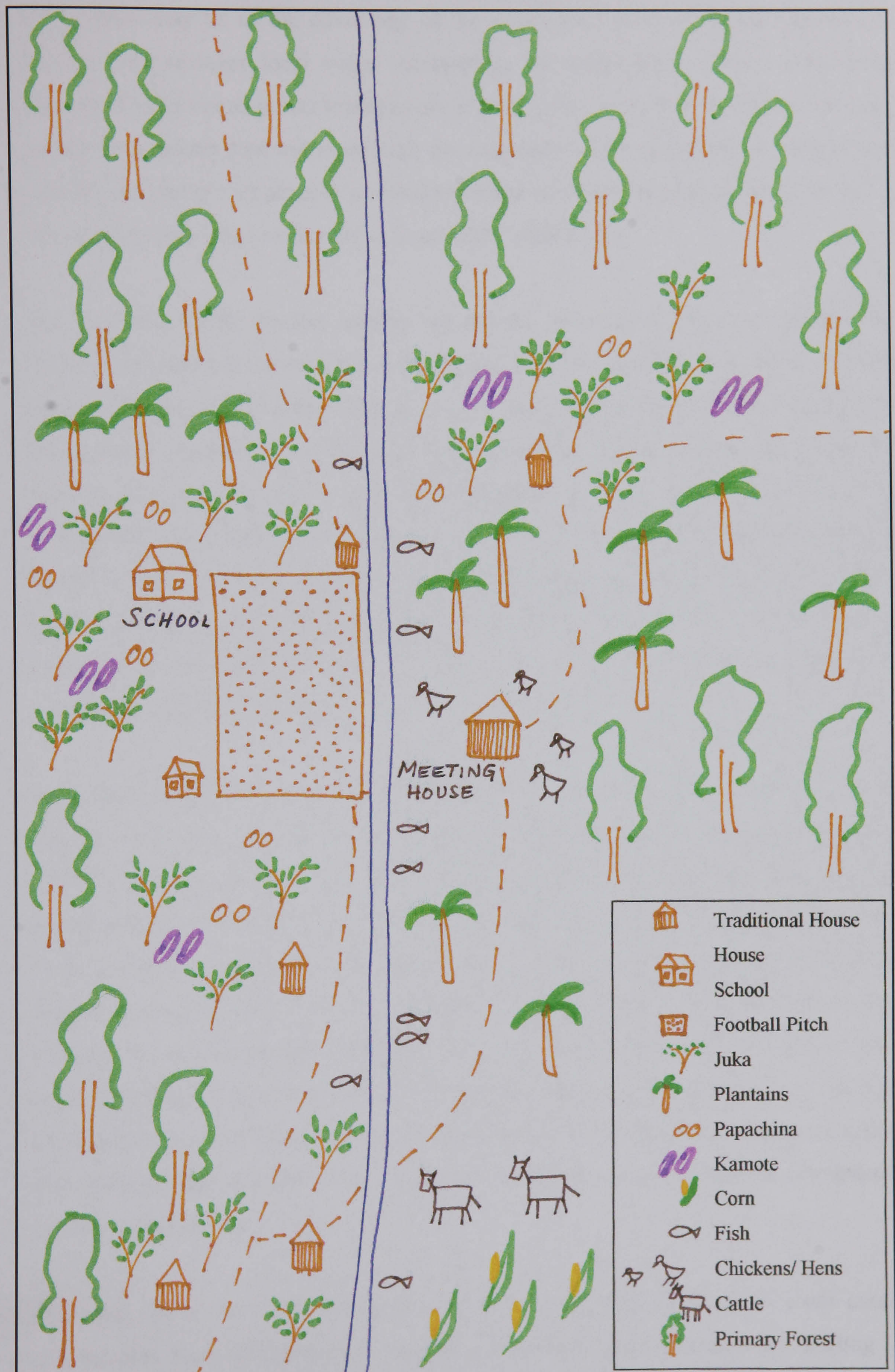
Gendered knowledge was also visible when local women drew and discussed their map. Thus, for example, the female elders had knowledge and practice of *chakra* agriculture and collection of herbs and plants. This knowledge indicated that women were more responsible for resource activities in the fields and near the houses than were the men. The women also showed greater knowledge about the status of the land and the health of people. What emerged from these discussions was that gendered knowledge claims were spatially differentiated and represented different zones of land and resource use and knowledge. Thus, where men's knowledge extended deep into the adjoining forest where they hunted the animals, women's knowledge extended only as far as the regenerating forest area where agriculture was based and herbs grew.

Thus, community maps developed in the context of the second project indicate that, while diverse activities are shown, the emphasis is on livelihood knowledge and 'traditional' resource management systems. Yet, even this initial introduction to the question of local knowledge suggests unevenness in the portrayal of residents' claims. In many cases, knowledge claims reflect the heterogeneous character of village life and livelihoods. Thus, community mapping is a discursive tool that may not represent the full set of community experiences. Indeed, it may even reflect uneven power relations between groups as certain claims tend to be the most conspicuous.

Figure 7.5 Chuwitayu Community Map



7.6 Mukucham Community Map



For example, community leaders tended to be the most influential in the community mapping exercises since they already had some connections with outsiders (L. Kuja 2004). This may be to the advantage of the community as a whole but depends on whether this stronger local voice incorporates or marginalises diverse other local interests. Subtle micro-power relations are at play here. They are reflected in how local communities assert themselves through the externally-supported resource management projects. As part of this process, community mapping clearly represents a key means by which local knowledge claims are defined, albeit selectively.

Yet, how did FIPSE leaders leading the second 'alternative' resource management initiative incorporate those claims into the project? The discussion here has assessed local community claims. However, these only make up a small part of the federation-led resource management projects which encompass a wider array of actors and interests. Community maps were an initial step because they enabled the communities to show how they used resources and how they would like circumstances to change. However, this was only the first step in developing the management plan, which requires communities to think about resources in a new way. Here, our concern is to assess where and how local claims were incorporated in the final version of the second resource management project.

The second project developed by FIPSE certainly asserts local claims more successfully than the first resource management project discussed above. The relative success here reflects a greater opportunity to reflect, negotiate and propose local claims to resource access and land in sustained manner. For example, participating Shuar communities have finally been able to make themselves visible to local government, national institutions and NGOs with the prospect of protecting local resources and land. Villagers have finally received management plans based in part on their claims to local resources and land and even approved by local government. The generation of 'hybrid' knowledge claims combining resources and land concerns has been a pioneering effort. This process has changed how many in the official sector approach community resource management.

That said, there were still ambiguities in the second project. Thus, in some cases, communities held different views from the federation over resource use leading to

controversy. This was the case in Mukucham (M. Peas 2004). FIPSE seemed to be inconsistent in how it deals with local claims to resource access. Indeed, the federation seemed to treat all claims as being equally reflective of all Shuar. Yet, this is not always the case as discussion of the community mapping exercises above showed due to existing unequal power relations *between* communities. In particular, they did not fully appreciate and respond to the claims made by some in the local communities seeking opportunities to secure access to resources and land based on 'traditional' resource management systems. FIPSE has rather reinforced a longstanding process of Shuar 'modernisation' and market integration that casts some doubt on the 'alternative' label of this project. Although 'alternative' in the sense of privileging Shuar resource access and control over that of outsiders, there have nonetheless been adverse social and environmental impacts associated with this second project and the wider development dynamics it subscribes to.

For example, cattle ranching and the clearing of land for pastures have led to extensive deforestation, degraded soil and the loss of hunting grounds. As argued by Luis Kuash (2004), a Shuar leader from Ijinti, "One of the greatest external pressures upon the social and economic systems of the Shuar communities has been the loss of forests and hunting grounds". These changes have moreover increased inequality between Shuar men and women. Since men have a virtual monopoly over animal husbandry, profits from cattle have transformed gender relations within Shuar society. And, as the men have been usually most widely exposed to urban markets, they have been the keenest to participate in 'modern' way of life (S. Tibi 2002). Thus, the sorts of changes that the second project proposes (and which, in turn, build on decades of land clearance for tenure security) have also led to an increasing economic inequality that has changed the nature of socio-political relations within Shuar communities.

Further, the ways in which the federation has been supported by powerful outside actors, such as the state agency CONDEMPE, casts further doubt about the 'alternative' label of this project. For example, FIPSE itself negotiated and ultimately decided to participate actively in PROPEDINE, the project which the World Bank, IFAD and the Government of Ecuador supported, which is specifically intended to promote indigenous development. The resources that this program has made available to the federation were without precedent, as was the notion that the federation would play a

direct role in the management of government programs. But also without precedent were the contradictions to be negotiated: an indigenous federation that opposes neoliberalism managing World Bank loans, market-oriented and infrastructure investments as a primary instrument for 'indigenous' development, the jockeying for power and resources among different indigenous groups, nationally and locally, and so on. These changes--unprecedented, complex and contradictory--challenge the assumption of our categories of 'alternative' resource management projects in the contemporary era.

Thus, alternative projects that provide for Shuar-led management are seemingly not a complete solution for regional resource access and management problems. In particular, where long-term conflicts exist between the state and local resources users, as in Shuar lands, sustained multi-actor negotiation is required before more equitable solutions to land management conflicts are to be found. Specifically, alternative community resource management must be accompanied with well-defined legal and political strategies if they are to succeed. Our two 'alternative' community projects thus illustrate the point that mobilising a community to support a local conservation effort designed to deny access to outsiders is not the same as mobilising it around claims for greater economic security or broader territorial control. Although Shuar-led initiatives often involve extensive community participation, it is not clear furthermore that such participation attains a wider impact, through for example the revision of state or corporate practices.

7.4 Summary

This chapter has examined Shuar struggles over access to natural and material resources. One source of conflict lies in state and transnational understandings of how to control and manage natural resources in contemporary times. This has manifested itself in neoliberal policy that supports the privileges of oil companies such as Burlington Resources. Thus, there is a continuing emphasis on a top-down approach featuring production and technical aspects of environmental management, rather than a social or ethical sense of appropriate local practices. Productivity indicators are used as proxy for socio-economic development and as a proxy for economic, social and political empowerment. Yet, such measures do not square with community-based

resource management such that they have tended ultimately to deny local people access to local resources. Indeed, historical, institutional, economic and political considerations create barriers for the implementation of policies involving the transfer of power over natural resources from the state and the oil companies into the hands of local communities.

However, growing awareness among the Shuar communities has encouraged the adaptation of community-based initiatives to manage local resources. As Peluso and Watts (2001) note, the challenge created by community-mapping projects is to push towards new paradigms that emphasise people and socio-economic development of rural communities living in forestlands, rather than emphasising conventional models of production. The historical legacy of state control over natural resources and enclosure of common lands, in combination with the increasing orientation towards privatisation of resources and lands, are nonetheless evident in Ecuadorian policies. However, the assumption that the state remains the ultimate environmental manager has changed, even though the belief that community-based management practices are 'backward' still shapes policy design albeit now often implicitly. Resource management remains inherently political since it revolves around the control of resources contested by actors at various scales.

This thesis has thus broadly highlighted indigenous movements and political organising in the Amazonian region in Ecuador. Specifically, it considered how a Shuar indigenous movement was created over the last decades to challenge land reforms, colonisation programs, neoliberal policies and oil development through both formal and informal political processes. The theoretical framework of the thesis combined the concerns of political ecology and new social movement analysis in order to investigate the ways in which notions of cultural identity, territory and place, and control over resource access are central to Shuar politics and struggles.

Thus, Chapter 5 examined the way in which the Shuar struggle has been partly about the articulation of Shuar cultural identity and its contested deployment in political battles with both the Ecuadorian state and transnational oil companies. In contrast, Chapter 6 considered how that struggle came to be defined in terms of particular geographical notions of Shuar territoriality and local sense of place. Here, the multi-

faceted effort by the Shuar federations to advance indigenous interests through the interweaving of ancestral and ecological claims was explored. Finally, Chapter 7 assessed the ways in which the Shuar struggle involved a complex politics of land and resource access. In aggregate, the three key empirical chapters have thus presented a complex picture of indigenous struggles using a Shuar case study. It remains in Chapter 8, then, to summarise the findings of the thesis and distil wider insights and a possible future research agenda from those findings.

Chapter 8 Conclusion

This thesis has considered the diverse ways in which indigenous people have responded to neoliberal policies and oil-based development using the Shuar people Ecuador's *Oriente* as a case study. Chapter 2 presented the three-fold theoretical framework of cultural identity politics, indigenous territoriality and place, and resource access and these research elements were then assessed in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. The Shuar case study proved a challenging but rewarding one in which to assess this framework. The thesis showed how the Shuar federations have been successful in forging political articulations of a cultural identity and even a powerful social movement based on the assertion of Shuar culture in an age of proposed oil development. As the thesis showed, issues of territory and place were also quite crucial in that quest. The work of territorial defence by the Shuar federations has been successful insofar that as the rights of the Shuar communities to defend their land collectively have been officially acknowledged which has enabled the Shuar federations, in turn, to use new legally-based means to try to stop the imposition of oil-based territoriality. Then, finally, the ways in which the Shuar strategies involved complex struggles over land and resource access was investigated. It was considered how the Shuar federations have influenced livelihoods and resource access for their members, as well as the manner in which territory and cultural identity play out in the context of location-specific resources issues. Throughout, attention was paid to the possible tensions and contradictions of the Shuar struggle, and notably differences between the Shuar federations and the communities they purport to represent.

In this, the final chapter of the thesis, the key findings are summarised in relation to the three main research themes, permitting assessment of the strength and weaknesses of the Shuar movement. The broader impact of these findings is then considered in light of a possible future research agenda for the study of indigenous politics.

8.1 Cultural Identity Politics

The first research theme guiding this thesis considered how the Shuar federations have articulated and politicised a Shuar cultural identity. The most important issue here was what it meant for the Shuar to be 'indigenous' and/or 'Shuar' in the context of new

relationships with the state, transnational corporations, non-governmental organisations, conditioned by shifting political and economic processes under neoliberal rule. Given this volatile and complex setting, how could the Shuar mobilise a cultural identity? What sort of articulation of indigenous identity and political positionality was at play here? It soon became clear that cultural identity and territory were key building blocks upon which a politics of cultural difference and indigenous rights were being constructed. And yet, this was an unstable and contradictory process. As Chapter 5 demonstrated, the Shuar federations built upon more than three decades of Shuar organising and resentment against land reforms, 'development', neoliberal policies and oil-based development to create an indigenous movement with national and international visibility capable even of challenging state and transnational powers. This was by any standard a remarkable achievement. Yet, as this thesis also showed, this federation-led struggle was both contentious and problematic.

What the Shuar case study does clearly demonstrate, though, is how cultural identity can be constructed politically. Shuar self-identification as indigenous with a specific cultural identity was articulated politically by a leadership keen to marshal all available resources to stymie oil-based development. This process of identity articulation drew selectively upon culturally-based local practices, landscapes, and meanings, and was forged through particular patterns of engagement among Shuar communities as well as with an array of other actors. As I explained in Chapter 4, this construction emerged from nation-wide struggle insofar as invaluable political and territorial rights were added to the National Constitution in 1998 as well as being reinforced when Ecuador signed ILO Convention 169 also in 1998--both as part of the embrace of a new discourse of multiculturalism and plurinationalism. As we further saw, the rise of cultural identity as a political category (with international support) became a resource that local indigenous struggles, in turn, could latch onto--for example, as with *Federación Indenpendiente del Pueblo Shuar del Ecuador* (FIPSE) in the late 1990s and early 2000s. The emergence of a national debate in Ecuador at that time was thus precisely both product of and spur for further indigenous claim-making on the state, a process by which cultural identity assumes an ethnic idiom through discursive and political activism.

Thus, the Shuar case study shows that the elaboration of indigenous identity reflects a complex and hybrid genealogy of identification that emerged over decades. That identity has been made around a strong inter-connected sense of territory, culture and tradition, but in the context of cultural, economic and political change. This elaboration was achieved through complex negotiations over cultural identity, even as the rise of indigenous politics nationally and internationally unleashed considerable political energy among indigenous people resentful of their marginalised status. A Shuar identity thus became a key tool used by the Shuar federations to build the political strategies based on collective Shuar political, economic, and cultural views critical of neoliberal policies and state-defined development, nationhood and democracy. For Shuar leaders, in particular, therefore local indigenous identity has been an essential element in their ability to engage in a contested political environment.

Moreover, Chapter 5 suggested that there was no simple sense of what it meant to be 'Shuar', no unproblematic unity, and no singular form of political subject (even though this has not stopped the Shuar federations from claiming that they represented all Shuar communities). Indeed, the analysis underscored the vulnerability of that struggle--notably, a fractious and divided 'we' as splits between Shuar federations and Shuar communities emerged, for example. As we saw, federation leaders articulated a highly politicised cultural identity and drew explicit and close connections between identity, territory and political organisation. In contrast, in the Shuar communities themselves, cultural identity was found to be embedded within complex everyday practices, including notably long-standing agricultural production and consumption systems--in other words, a world of micro-practices commonly identified as 'Shuar' locally. These place-based and gendered relations were notably different from the grand rhetorical and political articulations used by federation leaders to describe Shuar cultural identity.

Conceptualisations of identity even differed quite markedly *between* Shuar communities. As we saw in the context of severe land subdivision and cultural change, indigenous residents followed diverse strategies to sustain livelihoods, including the adoption of cattle ranching activities as well as cash-crop production and marketing. Such non-traditional activities inevitably raised questions about the Shuar adopting a *mestizo* identity. Interestingly enough, however, and despite the intensive commercialisation of livelihoods and agricultural production, even Shuar thus

integrated into the 'modern' economy still maintained that they were a distinctive cultural entity. Thus, a whole range of complex and hybrid identities became visible through the research complicating any notion of a homogeneous 'indigenous' identity.

Finally, the discussion in Chapter 5 of cultural identity politics revealed that, while the federations constantly invoked Shuar culture and tradition in their discourses, they also focused on participation in national politics using Western-style organisational strategies. This choice has re-shaped the approach of the federations providing new opportunities but also new sources of division. The political prominence and success of the Shuar federations have been linked to the provision of political, financial and technical support from various external actors. Yet the reliance (and dependence) on outside support has meant that the designs and implementation of projects was often based on the ideas and concerns of the outside agencies, rather than from the federations themselves liaising with Shuar communities. In particular, funding was seen as the 'Achilles heel' of their work since the need for money led to trade-offs at odds with their original objectives as autonomous Shuar bodies.

This set of ambiguous findings alerts us to the ways in which indigenous movements tend to reflect the institutional and intellectual environment in which they emerge and operate. Neither movements nor their strategies are entirely self-generated. Not only are they situated in the political and economic context that greatly influences what they do, but they are also situated in a web of ideas and historical precedents that influence what they choose to do. At the same time, however, indigenous movements such as those described herein *do* become heavily involved in strategies of resistance and ethnic assertiveness, in which the role and social control of traditional powerful actors (states and businesses) are challenged and reworked--as some of the social movements literature canvassed in Chapter 2 suggests.

8.2 Territory and Place

The second research theme guiding this thesis considered indigenous territoriality--how such territoriality was articulated in relation to state-sanctioned oil-based territoriality, and how the existence of rival territorialities has produced differing sorts of governance

possibilities. Thus, the focus of Chapter 6 was on the geographical building blocks of Shuar struggles--territory and place--and examined the processes surrounding Shuar land-based mobilisation as well as how territory became incorporated into political actions. Control over territory is the key political motivating force of Shuar mobilisation. Processes of territorial control and associated land-based conflicts are central to Shuar strategies of resistance as a reaction to oil development projects. As became clear in this thesis, moreover, territory has even come to play an important role in the formation of Shuar cultural identity itself.

The importance of defending a clearly defined Shuar territory has been linked by Shuar leaders to the enhanced threat posed by outside actors, above all the Ecuadorian state and oil transnational corporations (for example, Burlington Resources) via oil-based territorialization. Challenging that territorial understanding, the federations elaborated another territoriality premised on indigenous community, citizenship and identity. They have thus attempted to 'redraw' the map of state power by generating a new spatial order predicated on distinctive local affiliations to territory. Shuar map-making and land titling projects thus generate metaphorical and material means to contest state-designed oil development projects that deny Shuar geographies and resource rights. By providing alternatives to land colonisation by settler farmers as well as oil-based development predicated on the *Oriente* as an 'empty space', these maps and projects were seen to provide a distinct alternative to that organised by the state.

Chapter 6 also examined the extent to which residents were able to assert a local sense of place through these territorial initiatives. The study thus needed to unpack (however selectively) how a local sense of place is understood by various actors in a context of place-based relations and struggles. Here, the role of community maps in distilling place-based relations and perceptions was vital. In general, what emerged from the analysis was a strong sense of interdependence between people and specific places. While there were diverse place-based relations and perceptions, local senses of place nonetheless had one crucial aspect in common--namely, land as a common resource under threat from outsider-led 'development'. At the same time, though, difference was found in the specific relations linking local people with resources as well as with to outsiders. Ambiguities here had implications for how local people reacted to federation-led territorial initiatives and associated place-based opportunities. Indeed, by exploring

some of the conflicts that developed between local communities and the federations, it became clear that these struggles were indeed derived from micro-power dynamics associated with rival senses of place, notably reflecting the differing interests and networks of the various Shuar participants.

Chapter 6, moreover, discussed sense of place in terms of a process of 'placing culture'--or what I have also described as place-based cultural identity. Much of the discussion here was concerned with assessing different federation-led initiatives designed to 'place culture' (i.e. cultural identity) as a strategy to make land claims. Pre-existing political and economic factors undoubtedly shaped this process in as much as the federations articulated claims through a carefully selected set of wider national and international discourses designed to maximise political effect.

Take the example of ancestral domain claims. These are negotiated between the Shuar federations and state agencies and are of considerable potential importance. Federation leaders now commonly use ancestral domain claims as a strategy to 'place culture' and thereby secure 'officially' recognised rights to protected areas. A key indicator of whether local sense of place was asserted here was whether the protected area process challenged social and political power relations favouring elite access rights. To some extent, it was found that the initiatives that were considered allowed protected areas to function as 'other places' (Foucault 1986) nested within the context of official biodiversity management plans. Thus, some big economic interests (for example, the oil companies) were curtailed from these areas because the initiatives would close the protected area to exclusive private use (such as oil development) whilst maintaining it open for the controlled common use of local resources by local residents. The result here thus can be seen, to some extent at least, as an assertion of a local place-based opportunity. Yet given delays in winning formal approval for ancestral domain claims, these possible local opportunities may still be threatened in the future by the possibility that political and economic pressure for oil exploitation proves successful. In any event, in 'placing culture the federations had already compromised the local senses of place communicated to them at the community level by fitting into a fairly rigid context acceptable to powerful outsiders, such as state development agencies. Indeed, some place-based community-level understandings of Shuar identity were simply ignored--prompting tension between the federations and selected Shuar communities. Here too,

therefore, the findings point to crucial ambiguities in how the Shuar struggle is articulated in relation to specific issues of the thesis.

8.3 Resource Conflicts

The third and final research theme guiding this thesis addressed resource conflicts and access rights. Formal and informal governance was examined in particular in order to assess possible shifts in environmental governance and associated micro-power relations. As the Shuar case study suggests, with the expansionary powers of neoliberal policies and transnational corporations, state power itself is rapidly changing. Some state functions are being created or strengthened, while others are being weakened or eliminated altogether. It became clear generally in the course of this study how central wider political and economic processes have been to trends in the Ecuadorian Amazon (as elsewhere). The emphasis in Chapter 7 was not only on these changes, but also on the regimes of environmental governance, power relations and access rights affected by such changes.

Thus, Chapter 7 examined how the biophysical environment and associated human-environmental relations are being transformed through scientific and political processes of neoliberal thinking. Indeed, oil companies were seen to emerge with a strengthened mandate to oversee oil-based territorialization and associated 'sustainable' management of natural resources and land, resulting thereby in a radical alteration in the ways in which indigenous people would be able to interact with the local environment. Such 'green neoliberalism' is clearly a political discourse designed to foster governmentalisation and capitalisation of hotly contested ecological zones, such as oil block 24 in the *Oriente* (see also Goldman 2004).

The discussion in Chapter 7 highlighted moreover the central role of Burlington Resources in conflict over access to natural resources through tactics based on the idea of 'corporate social responsibility'. The firm's objectives here were scarcely hidden. Thus, it orchestrated 'negotiations' with those communities it needed to control in order to advance the oil agenda even as it played a key role in creating and exacerbating divisions among local people in order to counteract the work of the Shuar federations.

Here this was a classic divide-and-rule strategy. Following the practices of every transnational oil company working in the *Oriente*, Burlington claimed it would assist local communities in the elaboration of development projects and new work opportunities (Sawyer 2004; Wray 2000). This strategy of 'buying consciousness' played on the distrust of some Shuar for the actions of the federations that purportedly acted on their behalf. The firm thus dismissed the accusations of the Shuar federations by casting aspirations in turn on their own local legitimacy, thereby hoping to undermine opposition to oil-based development. Here, then, we saw an apparent transition in how environmental governance is conducted in the *Oriente* as corporate-led 'sustainable development' and 'corporate social responsibility' moved centre-stage.

Above all, the discussion in Chapter 7 clarified the complexity surrounding local Shuar claims derived from a long history of denied access to local resources even as it examined various obstacles to their assertion. As a response to new governance arrangements led by the oil companies, the Shuar federations have thus attempted to develop various resource management projects based largely on current community resource use patterns. There were seen to be two broad aspects to the assertion of 'alternative' resource management projects at the current historical juncture. The first involved the development of ecological reserves, which presented an opportunity to talk about and act upon biodiversity differently by, for example, incorporating local people's claims to local resources and land. While ultimately proposing limited governance benefits to local people, the first project that was analysed did nonetheless provide a new and somewhat positive experience of governance with one associated benefit that local people were beginning to become accustomed to questioning the nature of local political control. Yet, as we also saw, the groups that were involved in this project have different claims and clearly differed in their ability to assert their claims during project meetings. In fact, the villagers that were already marginalised within existing local power relations, continued to be so in the process of creating the proposed ecological reserve. As such, and although, local participation in the project was achieved, the result seemed to underscore the need to tackle access inequalities between powerful actors (states and businesses) and the project communities themselves.

The second aspect to the assertion of 'alternative' resource management related to a project supported by a federation (FIPSE) that took the decision to 'modernise' and 'develop' traditional agricultural practices. The commercialisation of livelihoods and agricultural production involved, however, more than simple adaptive, technological changes. Rather, the goal was to change the regional political economy itself in significant ways so as to increase the accumulation and retention of capital at the community level. Here again, the aim was to gain additional control of and access to resources for both Shuar communities and the federations. The assumption behind the second project is thus also that the hoped-for benefits of modernisation and development will strengthen indigenous organisations as socio-political vehicles fully capable of demanding political change, access to material and natural resources and a more prominent role for the Shuar generally in rural development and governance.

These sorts of 'alternative' federation-led experiences remain more the exception than the rule even today. As suggested in Chapter 7, rural development patterns in Ecuador are highly uneven and many localities remain largely excluded from economic growth options and are unable to exercise significant control over the markets in which they are often embedded. If this was so when I began this research study, it seems even more the case today as the combined effect of dollarization and trade liberalisation leave many local economies 'uncompetitive'. Major changes such as these are indicative that both community and federation struggles to achieve more control over local resources for indigenous people face enormous obstacles. The ways in which some Shuar have integrated their livelihoods and outlooks with processes of 'modernisation' and 'development' casts doubt about even the long-term, future of schemes that go under an 'alternative' label.

In short, Chapter 7 showed that the political significance and effectiveness of the Shuar movement is remains ambiguous. It *may* represent an effective means to secure access to land and resources as well as to develop 'alternative' resource management projects. Then again, it may be a largely ineffectual enterprise whose activities are mainly defined by outside interests and perceptions.

8.4 Indigenous Movements and Beyond

This study has thus assessed indigenous political organising through an analysis of how the Shuar negotiated the acquisition of new cultural identities, defined an indigenous territoriality, articulated diverse local senses of place, proposed protected areas, and challenged existing governance relations and access rights. This analysis was found theoretically in the context of work in political ecology and new social movement literature. A thesis concerned with the possibility of indigenous struggles, it was nonetheless ever mindful of the wider political and economic context--of how land reforms, neoliberal policies, oil-based development, micro-power relations and governance agreements have shifted over time with decidedly ambiguous consequences for the Shuar. As such, this thesis has sought to unpack the complex nature of indigenous political organising, and in doing so has sought to contribute to recent work that seeks to challenge generalised or even 'romanticised' understandings of indigenous movements (Bebbington 2004).

The decision to examine the case of the Shuar movement was motivated chiefly by a concern to 'put politics first' in my associated belief that an understanding of the political interests and actions of indigenous actors is the very stuff of much contemporary resource politics. This thesis has not been, however, about exemplifying how to 'do' political organising, but rather has sought to develop critical insights into the complex effects of such indigenous resistance against the practices of traditional powerful actors, such as states and transnational corporations. Certainly, the Shuar case study has revealed much ambiguity and tension in this process. Analysing this topic has therefore helped us to better understand what indigenous politics means for various groups and how these meanings relate to diverse political, economic and cultural motivations. This study thus adds to debate over the possible impact and meaning of indigenous struggles and has sought to understand such struggles as being, above all, complex and multi-faceted in nature.

Such understanding is clearly needed in the wider literature on political ecology and social movement which, sometimes, has seemed to be trapped in simplistic appreciations of indigenous struggles. Undoubtedly, there were 'noble' ethical based

resources here. And yet, analytical complexity and normative engagement can go hand-in-hand.

First, this study showed certainly how the political influence and achievements of indigenous organisations can be quite remarkable. Our case study discussed this in detail with reference to the Shuar federations, FIPSE and FICSH, but similar processes have occurred elsewhere (for example, Sawyer 2004). Shifts in the exercise of organised power and greater local control over the development process is perhaps the key achievement of Shuar struggles--but this shift was even more ambiguous and complex than I had anticipated when I began this research. On the one hand, the federations wished to strengthen a conception of Shuar identity largely grounded in the past, more 'traditional' forms of production and social organisation. Thus, their emphasis was notably on ethnic self-determination and cultural 'revalorisation'. On the other hand, the federations also demanded fairer access for Shuar people to markets, credit, research, and participation in the national political system--all processes that could be seen to jeopardise Shuar cultural identity.

This insight illustrates how analysis of indigenous movements can benefit from a more critical look at the motives and assumptions behind indigenous strategies. Thus, indigenous movements need to be understood as a *dynamic* response to *changing* contexts--a response that is constructed in other words through strategies of indigenous actors 'situated' within economic, socio-political and ecological contexts that are products of complex and contingent local, national and transnational processes. And yet, these strategies are not simply passive 'adaptations to environment'. Thus, for example, indigenous movements may even pursue practices that, on the surface at least, seem to be counter-productive--the incorporation of modern organisational and development strategies (for example cattle ranching) as a part of a strategy for cultural and economic survival. While these practices may challenge perceived notions about 'indigenous' livelihoods, at the same time they may also provide resources and ideas that are taken in and reworked by indigenous people to their advantage. Indigenous movements are both selective and eclectic in their strategy choices--choices that do not necessarily mesh with the concepts analysts have of them, but which are nonetheless possibly more coherent and helpful to the Shuar themselves.

Whether or not these are adequate responses is a separate question. If research does not understand the factors underlying them, however, it will never make a useful contribution to the specification or support of 'alternative' development strategies. Instead, there is the risk of imposing 'our' own perceptions of what is 'alternative' and 'indigenous'. The sort of empirical phenomena considered in this thesis demand further analysis and explanation, and complicate greatly any notion of indigenous movements as being simply civil society agents, or as only being involved in acts of resistance, or as only being about the defence of culture. A whole range of complex and hybrid identities are clearly at stake here, and this ought to occupy more attention in research that examines indigenous struggles.

Second, this thesis has highlighted the essential complexity of the interests of indigenous actors as they interact with each other, with other actors, and with the biophysical environment. We saw how indigenous movements are not always unified in their aims and interests. Here, internal divisions indeed weakened the political effectiveness of the Shuar movement. These internal differences have become notably manifested in struggles between indigenous organisations and indigenous communities, and encompass how local people organise politically, define cultural identity and mediate access to land and other resources. Thus, indigenous movements can be understood as complex 'fields of power' insofar as they are accordingly differentiated socially, politically and economically and express different sorts of social relations. Thus, they have to be understood as internally complex even as their strategies are ambiguous and multi-faceted in nature. These complexities within indigenous movements represent a less studied aspect that also ought to occupy far more attention in scholarly work.

Finally, indigenous federations strategies, indeed the very existence of federations, are influenced by religious, non-governmental, state and transnational corporate entities. We saw how the success of the Shuar federations was linked to the provision of political, financial and technical support from associated benefactors, such as religious groups as well as national and international NGOs. Yet, reliance on outside support meant that sometimes the decisions made regarding the design and implementation of projects came from outside support agencies rather than from the Shuar themselves. In these cases, what was intended originally to be a process of grassroots organising

turned out in practice to be merely participation by grassroots actors in a programme that was planned by outsiders. This raises troubling questions about the long-term viability of indigenous political organising. This thesis has suggested that there is often logic to the alliances that develop between different actors based on their organisational traits and interests. Thus, for example, a recurrent theme within political ecology is the 'natural' alliance between grassroots actors and NGOs. While my study has questioned this 'naturalness' of these alliances by highlighting the tensions and conflicts between actors, I nonetheless would emphasise that there is a further need for political ecologists and other researchers to engage in theoretical and empirical work that readdresses the political and ethical issues surrounding the multi-scalar networks and organisational strategies through which local people increasingly seek to secure natural resources and livelihoods. In the case presented here, these strategies not only involve material concerns but also the symbolic representational practices of identity construction itself.

It is worth concluding this thesis with a few final comments about the question of the practical role and purpose of political ecology research on indigenous movements. Who is the intended audience for this research and what it is hoped to achieve? It is my belief that political ecology is a research field that seeks to explain the topography of a politicised environment, and the role that diverse actors play in constructing that environment, so to better assist those actors disadvantaged in society who are fighting for social justice and environmental conservation (Bryant and Bailey 1997; Neumann 2005; Peet and Watts 2004; Robbins 2004). Yet, in doing so, I would argue, it is vital to acknowledge the essential complexity of the interests of actors as they interact with each other and with the environment as well as the possibilities for 'liberatory' unintended consequences to emerge. Indeed, this thesis has done so inasmuch as it highlighted the diverse political, economic, cultural and strategic considerations that have influenced indigenous movements. As we have also seen, however, the path of creating an alternative vision and polity is littered with severe obstacles.

Hitherto, political ecologists have tended for the most part to describe problems rather than prescribe solutions. It may be that this role is the most important contribution that scholars can make given that, in order to resolve the Third World's environmental crises, one must first clearly understand the nature and dynamic of those crises. The case for a more politically engaged political ecology is nonetheless compelling (Bryant

and Jarosz 2004; Neumann 2005). The suggestion here is not that political ecologists and other critical scholars are unaware of this literature and its practical implications, but rather that now is the time for research to reflect increasingly the practicalities and ethics of sustained political engagement given the constraints *and* opportunities of the current historical juncture.

The elaboration of such political engagement is a valid and important task, as part of a sustained questioning of dominant ideas and policies (Peet and Watts 2004). However, this political engagement must also be constructed from actual practice as well as being grounded in the aspirations of indigenous actors. This thesis has shown, however, that indigenous political organising is likely to always remain a contested and contradictory process, where different actors express a variety of interests, ideas and meanings. The paradox here is that some of these practices may incorporate precisely the features of 'modernity' and 'development' that scholars have long rallied against. Those who are in the business of investigating or working with indigenous movements must therefore be aware of and sensitive to popular aspirations here. There is finally a sense of urgency insofar as, often with indigenous people, there is the immediate problem of survival. Most Shuar residents, for example, have not the time to wait for possible new opportunities to be devised by scholars and/or social movement activists. If a material basis for the survival of Amazonian communities is not assured soon, a key element of indigenous identity will be eroded. Should this happen, then cultural struggles will have little apparent significance in the longer term, as indigenous people will be unable to sustain the material basis on which their very cultural identity rests. In the current policy context, this material basis is threatened. The challenge here, then, is to build pragmatic and realistic responses that work from contemporary contexts-- and which do so in a way that promotes longer-term opportunities reflective of the basic visions and strategies of the indigenous movements themselves. In its own way, this thesis has sought to contribute to this broader task through a nuanced appreciation of the complex dynamics surrounding specific indigenous struggles in Ecuador, and it is hoped thereby, a better understanding of the constraints and opportunities that are likely to shape these struggles in the years ahead.

Appendix

Guide Questions for Qualitative Interviews

The following questions guided the qualitative interviews with various actors including notably Shuar community residents, Shuar federation leaders, national and international NGO workers, and state officials. These questions were for general guidance only and tended to vary depending on the interview context and interviewee responses.

- How do the Shuar people perceive social, cultural, economic and political changes?

- How are cultural and social practices relating to the biophysical environment constructed among the Shuar?

- How and why did the Shuar mobilise and organise politically in the past and how has such struggle changed over time?

- To what extent and in what ways are the Shuar seeking to resist state 'development' programmes and oil company interventions? How far is community resistance an outcome of the actions of the Shuar federations?

- How do the Shuar attempt to construct a political strategy based on the connection between identity, culture and politics? What role have the Shuar federations played in this process?

- Who are the recognised leaders in the Shuar federations and/or communities?

- How are community concerns about the social and environmental impacts of 'development' first raised? How are they discussed? How are they resolved, if at all?

- How are decisions made in the communities and in the federations? Who is involved in decision-making?

- How is information from outside of Shuar territory accessed (and what sorts of information are thus acquired)? Who brings information from the outside to the community? How is such information spread in the community and with what effect?

- How are community decisions and information shared with outsiders? Who is responsible for disseminating village perspectives to outsiders? Which outsiders are involved in such information exchange and why?

- What relationships exist between the Shuar federations and the Shuar communities? How do these relationships affect life in the communities?

- What kinds of place-based relations exist within the communities and how do these connections relate to the development of local sense of place? Are there

variations in such a local sense of place among the Shuar, and how do 'development' programmes and/or oil development affect the local construction of a sense of place?

- How is the concept of territory understood among the Shuar and how important is it to them?

- How and to what extent are community residents able to articulate identity claims, local cultural practices, and sense of place in and through Shuar federation-led territorial initiatives?

- What is the nature of Shuar community access to local biophysical and material resources? How are resources allocated among community residents? Who makes the decisions here? How does such community decision-making relate to the decisions of outside actors such as state agencies and/or private corporations concerning land and natural resources?

- In what ways is local resource access important to Shuar communities and how does this vary across and within these communities? How and why have the Shuar attempted to protect these resources? What role (if any) have the Shuar federations played in this process?

- How do Shuar communities relate to the federations over how to define 'traditional' Shuar access to natural and material resources as intended for dissemination to outsiders (e.g. state officials, NGO workers)? Do any differences and tensions arise between communities and federations in this process of identification? Indeed, do divisions emerge within the Shuar communities themselves over how to politically represent Shuar access claims?

References

Secondary Sources

Accíon Ecologíca (2000) *El Ecuador Post Petrolero*, Quito: Accíon Ecologíca

Acosta, M.L (2001) "The State and Indigenous Lands in the Autonomous Region of Nicaragua: The Case of the Mayagna Community of Awas Tingni", in Assies. W, Van der Haar, G, and Hoekema, A. (eds.), *The Challenge of Diversity: Indigenous Peoples and Reform of the State in Latin America,* pp. 261-274. Amsterdam: Thelia Thesis

Agnew, J (1993) "Representing Space: Space, Scale and Culture in Social Science", in Duncan, J and Ley, D (eds.) *Place/Culture/Representation*, pp. 251-272, New York, London: Routledge

——(1994) "The Territorial Trap: The Geographical Assumptions of International Relation Theory", *Review of International Political Economy* 1 (1): 53-80

——(1999) "The New Geopolitics of Power", in Massey, D, Allen, J and Sarre, P (eds.), *Human Geography Today,* pp. 173–92 Cambridge: Polity Press

Agarwal, B (1992) "The Gender and Environment Debate: Lessons from India", *Feminist Studies* 18: 119-157

Agrawal, A (2001) "State Formation in Community Spaces? Decentralization of Control over Forests in the Kumaon Himalaya, India", *The Journal of Asian Studies* 60 (1): 9-40

Agrawal, A and Gibson, C (1999) "Enchantment and Disenchantment: The Role of Community in Natural-Resource Conservation", *World Development* 27: 629-649

Alvarez, S.E, Dagnino, E, and Escobar, A (eds.) (1992) *The Making of Social Movements in Latin America: Identity, Strategy, and Democracy*, Boulder: Westview Press

——(eds.) (1998) *Culture of Politics, Politics of Culture: Re-envisioning Latin American Social Movements*, Oxford: Westview Press

Anderson, B (1983) *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and the Spread of Nationalism*, London: Verso

——(1992) "The World Disorder", *New Left Review*, (193): 3-13

Anderson, K.P (2004) "Who Talks With Whom? The Role of Repeated Interactions in Decentralized Forest Governance", *World Development*, 32: 233-249

Andolina, R (1999) *Colonial Legacies and Plurinational Imaginaries: Indigenous Movement Politics in Ecuador and Bolivia*, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis University of Minnesota

Appelbaum, N.P (2003) *Muddied Waters: Race, Region and Local History in Colombia, 1846-1948*, Durham: Duke University Press

Appelbaum, N.P, MacPherson, N.S and Rosemblatt, K.A (eds.) (2003) *Race & Nation in Modern Latin America*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press

Arksey, H and Knight, P (1999) *Interviewing for Social Scientists*, London: Sage

Assies, W, Van der Haar, G, and Hoekema, A (eds.) (2001) *The Challenge of Diversity: Indigenous Peoples and Reform of the State in Latin America*, Amsterdam: Thelia Thesis

Assies, W, and Hoekema, A (2001) "Managing Resources: Between Autonomy and Partnership", in Assies, W, Van der Haar, G, and Hoekema, A (eds.), *The Challenge of Diversity: Indigenous Peoples and Reform of the State in Latin America*", pp.245-260 Amsterdam: Thelia Thesis

Atkinson, P, Coffey, A, Delamont, S, Lofland, J and Lofland, L (eds.) (2001) *Handbook of Ethnography*, London: Sage

Axelrod, R (1984) *The Evolution of Cooperation*, New York: Basic Books

Bankoff, G.F and Hilhorst, D (eds.) (2004) *Mapping Vulnerability: Disasters, Development and People*, London: Earthscan

Barnes, T. and Duncan, J. S. (eds.) (1992) *Writing Worlds: Discourse, Text and Metaphor in the Representation of Landscape*, London: Routledge

Barrera, C and Trujillo, P (1997) *Informe de la Investigacíon Realizada en las Asociaciónes en de Chiguaza, Pimpints y Tutuuientza,* Quito: SNV

Barry, J and Eckersley, R (eds.) (2005) *The State and the Global Ecological Crises*, Cambridge: MIT Press

Batra, A and Otero, G (2005) "Indian Peasant Movement in Mexico: The Struggle for Land, Autonomy and Democracy", in Moyo, S and Yeros, P (eds.) *Reclaiming the Land: The Resurgence of Rural Movements in Africa, Asia and Latin America*, pp. 383-410, London, New York: Zed Books

Baxter, J and Eyles, J (1986) "Evaluating Qualitative Research in Social Geography: Establishing Rigor in Interview Analysis", *Transaction of the Institute of British Geographers* 22:505-523

Bayliss-Smith, T.P (2003) "Livelihoods and Sustainability at the Agrarian Frontier", *Geografiska Annaler* 85B (1), 63-65

Beck, S.H and Mijeski, K.J (2000) "Indígena Self-Identity in Ecuador and the Rejection of Mestizaje", *Latin America Research Review*, Vol. 35, No 1

Bebbington, A (1991) "Indigenous Agricultural Knowledge, Human Interests and Critical Analysis", *Agriculture and Human Values* 8 1/2: 14-24

——(2001) "Reencountering Development: Livelihood Transitions and Place-formations in the Andes", *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 90: 495-520

——(2004) "Movements and Modernizations, Markets and Municipalities: Indigenous Federations in Rural Ecuador", in Peet, R and Watts, M (eds.) *Liberation Ecologies: Environment, Development, Social Movements*, 2nd ed. pp. 394-421, London and New York: Routledge

Bebbington, A, Carrasco, H, Peralbo, L, Ramon, G, Tores, V.H, and Trujillo, J (1993) "Fragile Lands, Fragile Organizations: Indian Organizations and Politics of Sustainability in Ecuador, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 18: 179-96

Bebbington, A and Batterbury, S (2001) "Transnational Livelihoods and Landscapes: Political Ecologies of Globalisation", *Ecumene* 8 (4): 369-464

Bebbington, A and Bebbington, D (2001) "Development Alternatives: Practice, Dilemmas and Theory", *Area*, 33 (1): 7-17

Bedford, T and Burgess, J (2001) "The Focus-Group Experience", in Limb, M and Dwyer, C (eds.) *Qualitative Methodologies for Geographers*, pp. 121-133, Arnold: London

Bennegan, P.L and Lucas-Fernan, M.L (1996) *Consulting the Spirits, Working With Nature, Sharing With Others: Indigenous Resource Management in the Philippines*, Quezon City: Sentro Para sa Ganap na Pamayanan

Bennett, K (2000) "Inter/viewing and Inter/subjectivities: Powerful Performances", in Hughes et al. (eds.) *Ethnography and Rural Research*, pp. 120-135, Cheltenham: Countryside Community Press

Berry, S (1993) *No Condition is Permanent*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press

——(2000) *Chiefs Know Their Boundaries: Essays on Property, Power and the Past in Asante*, London: Blackwell.

Blaikie, P (1985) *The Political Economy of Soil Erosion in Developing Countries*, London: Longman

Blaikie, P and Brookfield, H (1987) *Land Degradation and Society*, London: Methuen

Booth, D (ed.) (1994) *Rethinking Social Development Theory: Research and Practice*, Oxford: Blackwell

Bottasso, J (ed.) (1983) *Los Salesianos y la Amazonia*, Quito: Abya Yala

Braun, B (2003) *The Intemperate Rainforest: Nature, Culture and Power on Canada's West Coast,* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press

Brown, C.J and Purcell, M (2003) "There's Nothing Inherent about Scale: Political Ecology, the Local Trap and the Politics of Development in the Brazilian Amazon", *Geoforum* 36: 607-624

Brosius, P (1997) "Prior Transcripts, Divergent Paths: Resistance and Acquiescence to Logging in. Sarawak, East Malaysia", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 39/3: 468-510

Brosious, J. P., Tsing, A. L. and Zerner, C. (1998) "Representing Communities: Histories and Politics of Community-based Natural Resource Management", *Society and Natural Resources* 11, 157-168.

Bryant, R (1992) "Political Ecology: An Emerging Research Agenda in Third World Studies, *Political Geography* 11, 12-36

——(1994a) "Shifting the Cultivator: The Politics of Teak Regeneration in Colonial Burma 1826-85, *Modern Asian Studies* 28: 225-250

——(1994b) "From Laissez-faire to Scientific Forestry: Forest Management in Early Colonial Burma 1826-85, *Forest and Conservation History* 38: 160-70

——(1997a) *The Political Ecology of Forestry in Burma, 1824-1994*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press

——(1997b) "Beyond the Impasse: The Power of Political Ecology in Third World Environmental Research", *Area* 29: 1-15

——(2000) "Politicized Moral Geographies: Debating Biodiversity Conservation and Ancestral Domain in the Philippines", *Political Geography* 19:673-705

——(2002) "Non-government Organizations and Governability: 'Consuming' Biodiversity and Indigenous People in the Philippines", *Political Studies* 50: 268-292

——(2005) *Nongovernmental Organizations in Environmental Struggles: Politics and the Making of Moral Capital in the Philippines*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press

Bryant, R.L and Bailey, S (1997) *Third World Political Ecology*, London: Routledge

Brysk, A (1996) "Turning Weakness into Strength: The Internationalization of Indian Rights, *Latin American Perspectives*, 23 (2): 38-57

—— (2000) *From Tribal Village to Global Village: Indian Rights and International Relations in Latin America*, Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Bunker, S (1985) *Underdeveloping the Amazon*, Chicago: University of Illinois Press

Burgess, J (1996) "Focusing on Fear: The Use of Focus Groups in a Project for the Community Forest Unit", *Area* 28:130-35

Burgess, J, Limb, M and Harrison, C.M (1988) "Exploring Environmental Values through the Medium of Small Groups I: Theory and Practice", *Environment and Planning A* 20: 457-76

De la Cadena, M (2000) *Indigenous Mestizos: The Politics of Race and Culture in Cuzco, Peru, 1919-1991*, Durham, N.C: Duke University Press.

Calderon, F (1992) "Social Movements: Actors, Theories and Expectations", in Escobar, A and Alvarez, S.E (eds.), *The Making of Social Movements in Latin America: Identity, Strategy, and Democracy*, pp.19-36, Boulder: Westview Press

——(1995) *Movimientos Sociales y Politica*, Mexico City: Siglo XXI

Carvalho, G (2000) "The Politics of Indigenous Lands in Brazil", The Bulletin of *Latin American Research* 19: 461-78

Case, D.D (1990) *The Community's Toolbox: The Idea, Methods, and Tools for Participatory Assessment, Monitoring, and Evaluation in Community Forestry*, Rome: Community Forestry Field Manual 2, Food and Agricultural Organization

Castells, M (2004) *The Power of Identity*, London: Blackwell Publishing

Castree, N (2004) "Differentiated Geographies: Place, Indigenous Rights and 'Local' Resources", *Political Geography* 23: 133-167

Cecena, A.E (2004) "Geographies of the Zapatista Uprising", Special Issue, *Antipode* 36: 391-399

Chambers, R (1992) *Rural Appraisal: Rapid, Relaxed and Participatory*, Brighton: Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex

Chatterjee, P (1993) *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press

Chavez, G.V (2002) "Derechos Indígenas y Justicia Constitucional: Un estudio de Caso", in CDES (ed.) *Tarmiat: Firmes en Nuestro Territorio FIPSE vs. ARCO*, pp. 37-54 Quito: CDES/CONAIE

Chumpi, M (1999) *Exploitacíon Petrolera y Minera en los Territorios Shuar. Problemas y Posibles Planteamientos,* Quito: Abya-Yala

Clapp, J and Dauvergne, P (2005) *Paths to a Green World: The Political Economy of the Global Environment*, London: MIT Press

Clifford, J and Marcus, G (eds.) (1986) *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, Berkeley: University of California Press

Cohen, J.L (1985) "Strategy or Identity: New Theoretical Paradigms and Contemporary Social Movements", *Social Movements* Vol. 52 (4): 173-196

Cohen, J.L and Arato, A (1992) *Civil Society and Political Theory*, Cambridge: MIT Press

Colchester, (1992) "Sustaining the Forests: the Community-based Approach in South and South-east Asia", *Discussion Paper No 35*, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, Geneva

Colchester, M and Lohmann, L (eds.) (1993) *The Struggle for Land and the Fate of the Forests*, London: Zed Books

Collins, J (2000) "Una Transicíon desde las Elitas hacia una Democracia Participativa: Apuntes Sobre el Papel Emergenete los Movimientos Sociales en el Ecuador", in Massal, J and Bonilla, M (eds.), *Los Movimientos Sociales en las Democracias Andinas*, pp. 55-71, Quito: Facultad Latinoamericana Ciencias Sociales (FLASCO)

CONAIE (1999) *Las Nacionalidades Indígenas y Sus Derechos Collectivos en la Constitucion*, Quito: CONAIE

Cook, I (1997) "Participant Observation", in Flowerdew, R and Martin, D (eds.) *Methods in Human Geography*, pp.127-149, Harlow: Longman

Cook, I and Crang, M (1995) *Doing Ethnographies*, Oxford: Durham University Press

Crovetto, P.U (2001) "Territorial Rights and Indigenous Law: An Alternative Approach", in Assies, W, Van der Haar, G, and Hoekema. A (eds.) *The Challenge of Diversity: Indigenous Peoples and Reform of the State in Latin America*, pp.275-294 Amsterdam: Thelia Thesis

Cruikshank, B (1999) *The Will to Empower: Democratic Citizens and Other Subjects*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press

Dagnino, E (1998) "Culture, Citizenship, and Democracy: Changing Discourses and Practices in the Latin American Left", in Alvarez, S.E, Dagnino, E and Escobar, A (eds.), *Culture of Politics, Politics of Culture: Re-envisioning Latin American Social Movements*, pp. 33-63, Oxford: Westview Press

Darier, E (1999a) "Foucault and the Environment: An Introduction", in Darier, E (ed.) *Discourses and the Environment*, pp. 1-34, Oxford: Blackwell

——(1999b) "Foucault against Environmental Ethics", in Darier, E (ed.) *Discourses and the Environment*, pp. 217-240, Oxford: Blackwell

Davis, G, Scott, R.W, Zald, M, McAdam, D, Farrow, S, Tilly, C and Tarrow, S (eds.) (2005) *Social Movements and Organization Theory*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Dean (1999) *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society*, London: Sage

Dean, B and Levi, J.M (eds.) (2003) *At the Risk of Being Heard: Identity, Indigenous Rights, and Postcolonial States*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press

DeMars, W.E (2004) *NGOs and Transnational Networks: Wild Cards in World Politics*, London: Pluto Press

De Oliveira, A (ed.) (2006) *Decolonizing Indigenous Rights*, London: Routledge

Denzin, N and Lincoln, Y (1998) *The Landscape of Qualitative Research*, London: Sage

Devereux, S and Hoddinott, J (eds.) (1992) *Fieldwork in Developing Countries*, London: Harvester Wheatsheaf

Diani, M and McAdam, D (eds.) (2003) *Social Movements and Networks: Relational Approaches to Collective Action*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

Diaz-Polanco, H (1997) *Indigenous Peoples in Latin America: The Quest for Self-determination*, Boulder Colorado: Westview Press

Degregori, C. I (1998) "Movimientos Etnicos, Democracia y Nacion en Peru y Bolivia", in Dary, C (ed.), *La Construccion de la Nacion y la Representacion Ciudadana en Mexico, Guatemala, Peru, Ecuador y Bolivia,* pp. 159-225, Guatemala: FLASCO

Descola, P and Palson, G (eds.) (1996) *Nature and Society: Anthropological Perspectives*, London: Routledge

Doolittle, A.A (2005) *Property and Politics in Sahab, Malaysia: Native Struggles over Land Rights*, Seattle: University of Washington Press

Dorling, D and Fairbairn, D (1997) *Mapping: Ways of Representing the World*, London: Longman

Dussel, E (2000) "Europa, Modernidad, y Eurocentrismo", *Nepantla: Views from South* 1.3: 465-478

Eckstein, S (ed.) (2001) *Power and Popular Protest: Latin American Social Movements*, Berkeley: University of California Press

Ecologist, The (1993) *Whose Common Future? Reclaiming the Commons*, London: Earthscan

Ellington, K (2001) *The Myth of the Noble Savage*, Berkeley: University of California Press

Elmhirst, R (2001) "Resource Struggles and the politics of Place in North Lampung, Indonesia", *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography*, 22: 284-306

Escobar, A (1992) "Imagining a Post-development Era", *Social Text* 31: 20-56

——(1995) *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World*, Princeton: Princeton University Press

——(1996) "Constructing Nature: Elements for a Poststructural Political Ecology", in Peet, R and Watts, M (eds.) *Liberation Ecologies: Environment, Development and Social Movements*, pp.46-68, London: Routledge

——(1997) "Anthropology and Development", *International Social Science Journal* 154: 497-516

——(1998) "Whose Knowledge, Whose Nature? Biodiversity, Conservation, and the Political Ecology of Social Movements", *Journal of Political Ecology*, Vol. 5: 53-82

——(1999a) "After Nature: Steps to an Anti-essentialist Political Ecology", *Current Anthropology* 40: 1-30

——(1999b) "An Ecology of Difference: Equality and Conflict in a Globalised World", in Aripze, L (ed.) *World Culture Report 2*, pp. 1-20, Switzerland: UNESCO

——(2001) "Culture Sits in Places: Reflections on Globalism and Subaltern Strategies of Localization", *Political Geography* 20: 139-174

Escolar, M, Quintero, S and Reboratti, C (1994) "Geographical Identity and Patriotic Representation in Argentina", in Hooson, D (ed.) *Geography and National Identity*, pp. 346-366, Oxford: Blackwell

Espinosa, M.F (1999) "Ethnic Policies and State reform in Ecuador", in Assies, W, Van der Haar, G, and Hoekema, A (eds.) (2001) *The Challenge of Diversity: Indigenous Peoples and Reform of the State in Latin America*, pp. 47-56, Amsterdam: Thelia Thesis

Esteva, G (1999) "The Zapatista's and People's Power", *Capital & Class* 68 (Summer): 153-83

Esteva, G and Prakash, M.S (1992) "Grassroots Resistance to Sustainable Development", *The Ecologist* 22: 45-51

Fairhead, J and Leach, M (1995) "False History, Complicit Social Analysis: Rethinking some West African Environmental Narratives", *World Development* 23: 1023-1035

Falconi, F (2001) *Foreign Debt and Economic-Environmental Conditionalities*, Quito: CDES

FAO and IIRR (1995) *Resource Management in Upland Areas in Southeast Asia,* FARM Field Document 2, Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations,

Bangkok, Thailand, and the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction, Silang, Cavite, Philippines

Fals-Borda, O and Rahman, A (eds.) (1992) *Action and Knowledge: Breaking the Monopoly with Participatory Action Research*, New York: Apex

Fearnside, P.M (2003) "Conservation Policy in Brazilian Amazonia: Understanding the Dilemmas", *World Development* 31: 757-780

Ferguson, J (1994) *Anti Politics Machine: "Development", Depolitization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

——(2005) "Seeing Like an Oil Company: Space, Security and Global capitalism in Neoliberal Africa", *American Anthropologist*, 107 (3): 377-382

Field, L (1991) "Ecuador's Pan-Indian Uprising", *NACLA, Report on the Americas* 25 (3): 38-44

——(1994) "Who are the Indians? Reconceptulizing Indigenous Identity, Resistance, and the Role of Social Science in Latin America", *LARR* Vol. 29, No 3:237-48

——(1996) "Communal and Indigenous Identity in Otavalo, Ecuador", in Campbell, H (ed.), *The Politics of Ethnicity in Southern Mexico,* pp. 123-32, Nashville: Vanderbit University Press

Figueroa, I (2002) "Relaciones Comunitarios en el Bloque 24: Una Estrategica de Violacion de los Derechos", in CDES (ed.) *Tarmiat: Firmes en Nuestra Territorio*, p.p. 19-38, Quito: CDES/CONIAE

Flick, U (1998) *Introduction to Qualitative Research*, London: Sage

Flowerdew, R and Martin, D. (1997) *Methods in Human Geography: A Guide for Students Doing a Research Project,* Harlow: Longman

Forsyth, T (2002) *Critical Political Ecology: The Politics of Environmental Science*, London: Routledge

Foucault, M (1980) *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*, Brighton: Harvester

——(1982) "The Subject and Power", in Dreyfus, H and Rabinow, P (eds.) *Michael Foucault, Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, pp. 208-226, New York: Harvester-Wheatsheaf

—— (1984) "Space, Knowledge and Power", in Rabinow, P (ed.) *The Foucault Reader*, pp. 239-256 New York: Pantheon

—— (1986) "Of Other Spaces", *Diacritics*, 16(1): 22-27

—— (1988a) *Politics, Philosophy, Culture: Interviews and other Writings 1977-1984*, New York: Routledge

——(1988b) "The Ethic of the Care for the Self as a Practice of Freedom", in Bernauer, J, and Rasmussen, D (eds.), *The Final Foucault,* pp. 1-20, Cambridge Mass: MIT Press

——(1991) "Governability", in Burchell, G and Miller, P (eds.) *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governability*, pp. 87-104, London: Harvester Wheatsheaf

——(2000) *Power*, New York: Pantheon

Foweraker, J (1995) *Theorizing Social Movements*, Boulder: Pluto Press

Fox, J (1998) "Mapping the Commons: The Social Context of Spatial Information Technologies", *The Common Property Resource Digest* 45: 1-4

Fowler, A (2000) *The Virtual Spiral*, London: Earthscan

Francis, E (1992) "Qualitative Research: Collecting Life Histories", in Devereux, S and Hoddinott, J (eds.) *Fieldwork in Developing Countries*, pp. 86-101, London: Harvester Wheatsheaf

Friends of the Earth (1994) *Crude Operators: The Environmental, Social, and Cultural Effects of Texaco Oil Operations in the Tropical Forests of Ecuador*, London: Friends of the Earth

Gadgil, M and Guha, R (1992) *The Fissured Land: An Ecological History of India*, Berkeley: University of California Press

—— (1994) "Ecological Conflicts and the Environmental Movement in India", *Development and Change* 25: 101-36

——(1995) *Ecology and Equity: The Use and Abuse of Nature in Contemporary India*, London: Routledge

Garfield, S (2001) *Indigenous Struggle at the Heart of Brazil: State Policy, Frontier Expansion and the Xavante Indians, 1937-1988*, Durham and London: Duke University Press

Garzon, P (2002) "La Politica Petrolera Frente al Derecho de Informacíon, Consulta y Participacíon", in CDES (ed.) *Tarmiat: Firmes en Nuestra Territorio,* pp. 69-80, Quito: CDES/CONIAE

Gauld, R (2000) "Maintaining Centralized Control in Community-based Forestry: Policy Construction in the Philippines", *Development and Change* 21: 229-254

Gedicks, A (2001) "Resource Rebels: Native Challenges to Mining and Oil Corporations", Cambridge, MA: South End Press

Geertz, C (1973) *Thick Description: Towards an Interpretive Theory of Culture*, New York: Basic Books

Gerlach, A (2002) *Indians, Oil and Politics: a Recent History of Ecuador*. Wilmington, Del: Scholarly Resources

Ghai, D (1992) *Conservation, Livelihood and Democracy: Social Dynamics of Environmental Changes in Africa*, Geneva: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development

Ghai, D and Vivian, J.M (eds.) (1992) *Grassroots Environmental Action: Peoples' Participation in Sustainable Development*, London: Routledge

Gibson, C, McKean, M and Ostrom, E (2000) *People and Forests: Communities, Institutions and Governance*, Cambridge: MIT Press

Goldman, M (1997) "'Customs in Common': The Epistemic World of the Commons Scholars", *Theory and Society* 26(1): 1-37

——(1998) "Inventing the Commons: Theories and Practices of the Common's Professional", in Goldman, M (ed.), *Privatizing Nature: Political Struggles for the Global Commons*, pp. 20-53, London: Pluto Press

——(2004) "Eco-governmentality and Other Traditional Practices of a "Green" World Bank", in Peet, R and Watts, M (eds.) *Liberation Ecologies: Environment, Development and Social Movements*, 2nd ed. pp. 166-192, London: Routledge

Gonzalo Casanova, P and Roitman Rosenmann, R (eds.) (1996) *Democracia y Estado Multietnico en America Latina*, Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico (UNAM), La Jornada

Gordon, C (1991) "Governmental Rationality: An Introduction", in Burchell, G, Gordon, C and Miller, P (eds.) *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governability: With two lectures by and an interview with Michael Foucault*, pp. 1-52, Chicago: Chicago University Press

Grandin, G (2000) *The Blood of Guatemala: The Making of Race and Nation, 1750-1995*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press

Greenough, P and Tsing, A.L (eds.) (2003) *Nature in the Global South: Environmental Projects in South and Southeast Asia*, Durham: Duke University Press

Gross, J (1996) "Focus Groups as Alternative Research Practice: Experience with Transmigrants, Indonesia", *Antipode* 25(4): 295-319

Guha, R (1989) *The Unquiet Woods: Ecological Change and Peasant Resistance in the Himalaya*, Delhi: Oxford University Press

Guardiola-Rivera, O (2000) *Knowledges and the Known*, Durham: Duke University Press

——(2002) "In State of Grace: Ideology, Capitalism, and the Geopolitics of Knowledge", *Nepantla: Views from the South*, 3:1, 15-37

Gupta, A and Ferguson, J (1992) "Beyond Culture; Space, Identity and the Politics of Difference", *Cultural Anthropology* 7(1): 6-23

—— (eds.) (1997) *Culture, Power, Place: Explorations in Critical Anthropology*, Durham: Duke University Press

Habermas, J (1981) *The Theory of Communicative Action*, London: Beacon Press

Hajer, M (1995) *The Politics of Environmental Discourse: Ecological Modernization and the Policy Process*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

Hale, C (1994) *Resistance and Contradiction: Miskitu Indians and the Nicaraguan State, 1894-1987*, Stanford: Stanford University Press

Hall, A (1998) *Sustaining Amazonia: Grassroots Actions for Productive Conservation*, Manchester: Manchester University Press

——(ed.) (2000) *Amazonia at the Crossroads: The Challenge of Sustainable Development*. London: Institute of Latin American Studies, University of London

Hall, S (1990) "Cultural Identity and Diaspora", in Rutherford, J (ed.) *Identity, Community, Culture, Difference*, pp. 392-403, London: Lawrence and Wishart

Hamel, J, Dufour, S and Fortin, D (1993) *Case Study Methods*, London: Sage

Hammersley, M and Atkinson, P (1995) *Ethnography: Principle and Practice*, London: Tavistock

Hansen, T.B and Stepputat, F (2001) *State of Imagination: Ethnographic Explorations of the Postcolonial State*, Durham and London: Duke University Press

Hardin, G (1967) "The Tragedy of the Commons", *Science* 162: 1243-8

Harley, J.B (1996) "Deconstructing the Map", in Agnew, J, Livingstone, D and Alisdair, R (eds.) *Human Geography*, 3rd ed. pp. 422-443, Oxford: Blackwell

Harner, M (1972) *Sacred Water Falls*, Berkeley: University of California Press

——(1977) *Shuar Pueblos de las Cascadas Sagradas*, Quito: Mundo Shuar

Hecht, S.B and Cockburn, A (1989) *The Fate of the Forests: Developers, Destroyers and Defenders of the Amazon*, London: Verso

Hendricks, J.W (1996) "Poder y Conocimiento: Discurso y Transformacíon Ideológica entre los Shuar", in Santos Graneero, F (ed.) *Globalizacíon y Cambio en la Amazonía Indígena,* pp. 131-181, Qiuto: FLASCO/ Abya Yala

Heyd, T (1997) "Art and Foucauldian Heterotopias", in Pile, S and Keith, M (eds.) *Geographies of Resistance*, pp. 152-162, London: Routledge

Hobsbawn, E.J (1990) *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Program, Myth, Reality*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hodgson, D.L and Schroeder, R.A (2002) "Dilemmas of Counter-Mapping Community Resources in Tanzania", *Development and Change* 33: 79-100

Hoggart, K, Lees, L and Davies, A.R (2001) *Researching Human Geography*, London: Arnold

Hong, E (1987) *Natives of Sarawak: Survival in Borneo's Vanishing Forests*, Penang: Institute Masyarakat

Horowitz, D (1985) *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, Berkeley: The University of California Press.

Horta, K (2000) "Rainforest: Biodiversity Conservation and the Political Economy of International Financial Institutions", in Stott, P and Sullivan, S (eds.) *Political Economy: Science, Myth and Power*, pp. 179-202, London: Arnold

Howard, S.M (1997) "Land Conflict and Mayangna Territorial Rights in Nicaragua's Bosawas Reserve", *Bulletin of Latin American Research* Vol. 17: 19-32

Howitt, E, Connell, J and Hirsch, P (eds.) (1996) "*Resources, Nations and Indigenous Peoples: Case Studies from Australia, Melanesia, and Southeast Asia*", Melbourne: Oxford University Press

Howitt, R (2001) *Rethinking Resource Management: Justice, Sustainability, and Indigenous Peoples*, London: Routledge

Hughes, A, Morris, C, and Seymour, S (eds.) (1999) *Ethnography and Rural Research*, Cheltenham: Countryside and Community Press

Hulme, D and Edwards, M (eds.) (1997) *NGOs, States and Donors: Too Close for Comfort?* London: Macmillan

Hurtado, O (1990) *Politica Democratica*, Vol. I and II, Quito: Editora Nacional

Hvalkof, S (2000) "Outrage in Rubber and Oil: Extractivism, Indigenous Peoples and Justice in the Upper Amazon", in Zerner, C (ed.), *Peoples, Plants, and Justice: Resource Extraction and Conservation in Tropical Developing Countries,* pp. 425-450, New York: Columbia University Press

Hviding, E and T. Bayliss-Smith, T (2000) *Islands of Rainforest: Agroforestry, Logging and Eco-Tourism in Solomon Islands*, Ashgate: Aldershot.

Igoe, J (2003) "Scaling Up Civil Society: Donor Money, NGOs and the Pastoralist Land Rights Movement in Tanzania", *Development and Change* 34(5): 863-885

Ingold, T (1992) "Culture and the Perception of the Environment", in Croll, E and Parkin, D (eds.), *Bush Base: Forest Farm, Culture, Environment and Development*, pp. 39-56, London: Routledge

Irvine, J and Gal, S (2000) "Language Ideology and Linguistic Differentiation", in Kroskrity, P (ed.) *Regimes of Language: Ideologies, Politics, and Identities,* pp. 35-83, Santa Fe, New Mexico: School of American Research Press

Jackson, P (ed.) (1987) *Anthropology at Home*, London: Routledge

Jasper, J.M (1997) *The Art of Moral Protest*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Jelin, E (ed.) (1990) *Women and Social Change in Latin America*, London: Zed Books

Jenkins, J.C (1983) "Resource Mobilization Theory and the Study of Social Movements", *Annual Review of Sociology*, 9: 527-553

Johnston, H and Klandermans (eds.) (1995) *Social Movements and Culture*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press

Johnston, R.J (1989) *Environmental Problems: Nature, Economy and State,* London: Belhaven

—— (1996) *Environmental Problems: Nature, Economy and State,* 2nd ed. London: Belhaven

—— (2001) "Out of the 'Moribund Backwater': Territory and Territoriality in Political Geography", *Political Geography* 20: 677-94

Jomo, K.S et al. (2004) *Deforesting Malaysia: the Political Economy and Social Ecology of Agricultural Expansion and Commercial Logging*, London: Zed Books

Joseph, G and Nugent, D (1994) "Popular Culture and State Formation in Revolutionary Mexico", in Joseph, G and Nugent, D (eds.) *Everyday Forms of State Formation: Revolution and the Negotiation of Rule in Modern Mexico,* pp. 3-23, Durham, NC: Duke University Press

Karl, T.L (1997) *Paradox of Plenty: Oil Booms and Petro-states*, Berkeley: University of California Press

Karsten, R (1923) *Blood Revenge: War and Victory Feasts Among the Jívaro Indians of Eastern Ecuador*, Washington: Smithsonian Institute, Bureau of American Ethnology

——(1926) *The Civilization of the South American Indians*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf

——(1935) *The Head-hunters of Western Amazonas: The Life and Culture of the Jívaro Indians in the Eastern Ecuador and Peru*, Helsinki: Societies Scientiarum Fennica, Commentarios Humanarum Litterarum, 7(1)

Kathirithamby-Wells, J (2005) *Nature and Nation: Forests and Development in Peninsular Malaysia*, Copenhagen: NIAS Press

Katz, C (1994) "Playing the Field: Questions of Fieldwork in Geography". *Professional Geographer* 46 (1): 67-72

Kearny, M and Varese, S (1995) *Latin American Indigenous Peoples: Changing Identities and Forms of Resistance*, Boulder: Westview Press

Keats, D (2000) *Interviewing*, Buckingham: Open University Press

Keck, M and Sikkink, K (1998) *Activists beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*, Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press

Kelly, P.F (2002) "Spaces of Labor Control: Comparative Perspectives from Southeast Asia", *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 27: 395-411

Kimerling, J (1992) *Crudo Amazonico*, Quito: Abya-Yala

Kitchen, R and Tate, N (1999) *Conducting Research in Human Geography: Theory, Methodology and Practice*, London: Prentice Hall

Kitschelt, H (1986) "Political Opportunity Structures and Political Protest", *British Journal of Political Science* 16:57-85

Klooster, D (2000) "Community Forestry and Tree Theft in Mexico: Resistance or Complicity in Conservation", *Development and Change* Vol.31: 281-305

Koning, K de and Marion, M (1996) *Participatory Research in Health: Issues and Experiences*, London: Zen Books Ltd.

Korovkin, T (2000) "Weak Weapons, Strong Weapons? Hidden Resistance and Political Protest in Highland Ecuador", *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 27, No. 3: 1-29

Korten, D (1980) "Community Organization and Rural Development- A Learning Process Approach", *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 40 (5): 480-511

——(1990) *Getting to the 21st Century*, West Hartford: Kumarian Press

Laclau, E (2000) "Constructing Universality", in Butler, J, Laclau, E and Zizek, S (eds.), *Contingency, Hegemony, Universality: Contemporary Dialogues on the Left*, pp. 281-307 New York: Verso

Laclau, E and Mouffe, C (1985) *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*, London: Verso

Lander, E (2000) "Eurocentrism and Colonialism in Latin American Social Thought", *Nepantla: Views From the South*, Vol. 1 No. 3: 519-532

Lawrence, K (2002) *Negotiated Biodiversity Conservation for Local Social Change: A Case Study of Northern Palawan, Philippines*, Unpublished PhD thesis, King's College London

Leach, M and Mearns, R (eds.) (1997) *The Lie of the Land*, London: Currey

Leach, M, Mearns, R and Scoones, I (1997) *Environmental Entitlements,* IDS Working Paper, University of Sussex

Leon, J (1994) *De Campesinos a Ciudadanos Diferentes*, Quito: Abya Yala

Levy, D.L and Newell, P.J (eds.) (2004) *The Business of Environmental Governance*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press

Li (2004) "Environment, Indigeneity and Transnationalism", in Peet, R and Watts, M (eds.) *Liberation Ecologies: Environment, Development, Social Movements*, 2nd ed., pp. 339-370, London and New York: Routledge

Lluco, M (2001) "In Minga for Life", in Lucas, K (ed.) *We Will not Dance on Our Grandfathers' Tomb: Indigenous Uprisings in Ecuador*, pp. 112-121, London: CIIR

Lopez, V (2002) "Petroleo y Pueblos Indígenas en la Amazonía Centro-Sur", in CDES (ed.) *Tarmiat: Firmes en Nuestra Territorio,* pp. 97-106, Quito: CDES/CONIAE

Lucas, K (ed.) (2001) *We Will not Dance on Our Grandfathers' Tomb: Indigenous Uprisings in Ecuador*, London: CIIR

Lyon, T.P and Maxwell, J.W (2004) *Corporate Environmentalism and Public Policy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Macas, L (1991) *El Levantimiento Indígena Visto por sus Protagonistas*, Quito: Instituto Latinoamericano de Investigacíones Sociales (ILDIS)

——(2001) "Ushay, Power, is a Collective Concept", in Lucas, K (ed.) *We Will not Dance on Our Grandfathers' Tomb: Indigenous Uprisings in Ecuador*, pp. 104-107, London: CIIR

Madge, C (1994) "The Ethics of Research in the 'Third World'", in Robson, E and Willis, K (eds.) *Postgraduate Fieldwork in Developing Areas: A Rough Guide*, pp.91-102, London: IBG Developing Areas Studying Group Monograph 8

Martin, D.G (2003) "'Place-Framing' as Place-Making: Constituting a Neighborhood for Organizing and Activism", *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 93(3): 730-750.

Martinez-Alier, J (2001) "Mining Conflict, Environmental Justice and Valuation", in B. De Marchi (ed.) *Journal of Hazardous Materials*, Special Issue, *Risk and Governance*, 86, 1-3: 153-170

Martz, J.D (1987) Politics *and Petroleum in Ecuador*, New Brunswick, N.J: Transaction Books

Massey, D (1994) *Space, Place and Gender*, Oxford: Blackwells

——(1995) "Places and Cultures in an Uneven World", in Massey, D and Jess, P (eds.) *A Place in the World? Places, Cultures and Globalisation*, pp. 216-237, Oxford: Open University Press

Massey, D and Jess, P (1995) "The Contestation of Place", in Massey, D and Jess, P (eds.) *A Place in the World? Places, Cultures and Globalisation*, pp. 134-172, Oxford: Open University Press

McAdam, D, McCarthy, J.D, and Zald, M.N (eds.) (1996) *Comparative Perspective on Social Movements*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

McCarty, J.D and Zald, M.N (1987) "The Trend of Social Movements in America", in Zald, M.N and McCarthy, J.D (eds.) *Social Movements in an Organizational Society,* pp. 337-92, New Brunswick: Transaction

McCracken, G. (1988) *The Long Interview.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage

Meisch, L.A (1994) "We will not Dance on the Tomb of Our Grandparents: 500 Year of Resistance in Ecuador", *Latin American Anthropology Review* 4 No. 2: 55-74

Melo, M (2002) "El Caso Bloque 24: Los Derechos de los Pueblos Indígenas en el Contexto del Modelo Extravista Petroleo", in CDES (ed.) *Tarmiat: Firmes en Nuestra Territorio,* pp. 81-96, Quito: CDES/CONIAE

Melo, M, Ortiz, T, P, and Lopez, V.A (2002) *Petrolero, Ambiente y Derechos en la Amazonia Sur*, Quito: CDES, Amazanga

Melucci, A (1988a) "Social Movements and the Democratization of Everyday Life", in Keane, J (ed.), *Civil Society and the State: New European Perspectives*, pp. 245-260, London: Verso

——(1988b) "Getting Involved, Identity and Mobilization in Social Movements", in Klandermans, B, Hanspeter, K, and Tarrow, S (eds.) *International Social Movement Research: A Research Annual*, pp. 329-348, Greenwich: JAJ Press

——(1989) *Nomads of the Present*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press

Mignolo, W (2000a) *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press

——(2000b) "Diferencia Colonial y Razon Postoccidental", in Castro-Gomez, S (ed.), *La Reestructuracion de las Ciencias Sociales en America Latina,* pp.3-28, Bogota: Instituto Pensar/Centro Editorial Javeriana

Mittermeier, R.A et al. (2000) *Hotspots*, Washington DC: Conservation International

Moore, H (1993) "The Differences Within and the Differences Between", in de Valle, T (ed.) *Gendered Anthropology*, pp. 193-204, London: Routledge

Moore, S.F (1986) *Social Facts and Fabrications: 'Customary' Law on Kilimanjaro, 1880-1980*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Moore, D (1996) "Remapping Resistance: 'Ground for Struggle' and the Politics of Place", in Pile, S and Keith, M (eds.) *Geographies of Resistance,* pp. 87-106, London: Routledge

——(1998) "Subaltern Studies and the Politics of Place", *Cultural Anthropology* 13/3:

Moore, S.D, Kosek, J, and Pandian, A (eds.) (2003) *Race, Nature, and the Politics of Difference,* Durham: Duke University Press

Morris, A and Mueller, C (eds.) (1992) *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory*, New Haven: Yale University Press

Murray, Li, T (2001) "Relational Histories and the Production of Difference on Sulawesi's Upland Frontier", *The Journal of Asian Studies* 60 (1): 41-66

Nelson, C, Treichler, P and Grossberg, L (eds.) (1992) *Cultural Studies*, New York: Routledge

Neumann, R.P (1992) "Political Ecology of Wildlife Conservation in the Mt Meru Area of Northeast Tanzania", *Land Degradation and Rehabilitation*, 3: 85-98

—— (1998) *Imposing Wilderness: Struggles over Livelihood and Nature Preservation in Africa*, Berkeley: University of California Press

——(2004) "Nature-State-Territory: Toward a Critical Theorisation of Conservation Enclosures", in Peet, R and Watts, M (eds.) *Liberation Ecologies: Environment, Development, Social Movements,* 2nd ed. pp. 195-217, London: Routledge

——(2005) *Making Political Ecology*, New York: Hodder Arnold,

O'Faircheallaigh, C (1998) "Resource Development and Inequality in Indigenous Societies", *World Development* 26: 381-94

Offe, C (1985) "New Social Movements: Changing Boundaries of the Political", *Social Research* 52: 817-68.

Ophuls, W (1977) *Ecology and the Politics of Scarcity*, San Francisco: W. H Freeman and Company

Oslender, U (2004) "Fleshing out the Geographies of Social Movements: Colombia's Pacific Coast Black Communities and the 'Aquatic Space', *Political Geography* 23: 957-985

Ostrom, E (1990) *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Ostrom, E, Dietz, T, Dolsak, N, Stern, P.C, Stonich, S and Weber, E.U (2002) *The Drama of the Commons*, Washington DC: National Academic Press

Otero, G (ed.) (2004b) *Mexico in Transition: Neoliberal Globalism, the State and Civil Society*, London: Zed Books

Painter, M and Durham, W.H (eds.) (1995) *The Causes of Environmental Destruction in Latin America*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press

Painter, J and Philo, C (1995) "Spaces of Citizenship", *Political Geography* 14 (2): 107-70

Pallares, A (2002) *From Peasant Struggles to Indian Resistance: The Ecuadorian Andes in the Late Twentieth Century*, Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press

Palmero, Z (2001) "Politicas Academicas y Conflictos del Saber: Desafios en la Periferia", *Comentario Internacional* 2: 89-100

Parajuli, P (1998) "Beyond Capitalized Nature: Ecological Ethnicity as an Arena of Conflict in the Regime of Globalisation", *Ecumene* 5:186-217

Paulson, S and Gexon, L.L (2005) *Political Ecology: Across Spaces, Scales, and Social Groups*, New Brusnwick, N.J: Rutgers University Press

Peet, R and Watts, M (eds.) (1996) *Liberation Ecologies: Environment, Development and Social Movements*, London: Routledge

——(eds.) (2004) *Liberation Ecologies: Environment, Development, Social Movements*, 2nd ed., London: Routledge

Peluso, N.L (1992) *Rich Forests, Poor People: Resource Control and Resistance in Java*, Berkeley: University of California Press

——(1995) "Whose Woods are These? Counter-mapping Forest Territories in Kalimantan Indonesia", *Antipode* 27:383-406

Peluso, N and Harwell (2001) "Territory, Custom, and the Cultural Politics of Ethnic War in West Kalimantan, Indonesia", in Peluso, N and Watts, M (eds.) *Violent Environments,* pp. 83-116, New York: Cornell University Press

Peluso, N and Watts, M (eds.) (2001) *Violent Environments*, Ithaca: University of Arizona Press

Perreault, T (2001) "Developing Identities: Indigenous Mobilization, Rural Livelihoods, and Resource Access in Ecuadorian Amazon", *Ecumene* 8(4): 381-412

——(2003a) "Making Space: Community Organization, Agrarian Change and the Politics of Scale in the Ecuadorian Amazon", *Latin American Perspectives* 30(1): 96-121

——(2003b) "Changing Places: Transnational Networks, Ethnic Politics and Community Development in the Ecuadorian Amazon", *Political Geography* 22(1): 61-88

Perruchon, M (2003) *I Am Tsunki: Gender and Shamanism among the Shuar of Western Amazonia*, Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, Studies in Cultural Anthropology No. 33

Peters, C (1994) *A Practitioner's Guide to Tropical Forest Ecology*, Washington DC: World Wildlife Fund Biodiversity Support Network

Peters, P.E (1994) *Dividing the Commons: Politics, Policy and Culture in Botswana*, University Press of Virginia

Petras, J and Veltmeyer, H (2001) "Are Latin American Peasant Movement Still a Force for Change? Some New Paradigms Revisited", *Journal of Peasant Studies* 28(2): 83-118

Phillips, M (2000) "Theories of Positionality and Ethnography in the Rural", in Hughes et al. (eds.) *Ethnography and Rural Research*, pp. 28-47, Cheltenham: Countryside Community Press

Pile, S (1991) "Interpretive Geographies", *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 16: 458-69

Pile, S (1997) "Introduction: Opposition, Political Identities, and Spaces of Resistance", in Pile, S and Keith, M, (eds.), *Geographers of Resistance,* pp. 1-32, London: Routledge

Punch, M (1986) *The Politics and Ethics of Fieldwork*, London: Sage

Punch, S (2002) "Methods and Research Relations with Children in Rural Bolivia", in Limb, M and Dwyer, C, (eds.) *Qualitative Methodologies for Geographers*, pp. 165-180, London: Arnold

Poole, P (1995) *Indigenous Peoples, Mapping and Biodiversity Conservation: An Analysis of Current Activities and Opportunities for Applying Geometric Technologies*, Washington DC: Biodiversity Support Program

Quigley, P (1999) "Nature as a Dangerous Place", in Darier, E (ed.) *Discourses and the Environment*, pp. 67-88, London, New York: Routledge

Quijano, A (2000) "Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America", *Nepantla: Views From the South* 1:3: 533-580

Radcliffe, S (2001a) "Development, the State and Transnational Political Connections", *Global Networks* 1: 19-36

——(2001b) "Imagining the State as a Space: Territoriality and the Formation of the State in Ecuador", in Blom Hansen, T and Stepputat, F (eds.) *States of Imagination: Ethnographic Explorations of the Colonial State,* pp. 123-148, Durham and London: Duke University Press

Radcliffe, S, Laurie, N, and Andolina, R (2002) *Indigenous People and Political Transnationalism: Globalization from Below Meets Globalization from Above*, Research Paper presented by Sarah Radcliffe to the Transnational Communities Program Seminar, held at School of Geography, University of Oxford

Radcliffe, S.A and Westwood, S (1996) *Re-making the Nation: Place, Politics, and Identity in Latin America*, London: Routledge

Rangan, H (2000) *Of Myths and Movement: Rewriting Chipko and Himalayan History*, London: Verso

——(2004) "From Chipko to Uttaranchal: The Environment of Protest and Development in the Indian Himalaya", in Peet, R and Watts, M (eds.) *Liberation Ecologies: Environment, Development, Social Movements*, 2nd ed. pp. 371-394, London and New York: Routledge

Redclift, M (1987) *Sustainable Development: Exploring the Contradictions*, London: Methuen

Redford, K.H (1991) "The Ecologically Noble Savage", *Onion Nature Quarterly* 9, No. 3: 25-29

Richards, M (1997) "Common Property Resource Institutions and Forest Management in Latin America", *Development and Change* 28: 95-117

Ribot, J (1998) "Theorising Access: Profits along Senegal's Charcoal Commodity Chain", *Development and Change* 29: 307-41

Robbins, P (2004) *Political Ecology: A Critical Introduction,* Malden, MA: Blackwell

Rocheleau, D, Thomas-Slayter, B, Asamba, A and Jama, M (1996) *Feminist Political Ecology: Global Issues and Experiences*, London: Routledge

Rochlin, J.F (2003) *Vanguard Revolutionaries in Latin America: Peru, Colombia, Mexico*, Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers

Rodrigo, A and Calderon, J (1988) *Multinational Corporations and Government Relations: the Oil Industry in Ecuador, 1972-1979*, London: University of London

Rose, G (1995) "Place and Identity: A Sense of Place", in Massey, D and Jess, P (eds.) *A Place in the World? Places, Cultures and Globalisation*, pp. 88-129, Oxford: Open University Press

Rose, N (1996) "Governing 'Advanced' Liberal Democracies", in Barry, A, Osborne, T and Rose, N (eds.) *Foucault and Political Reason: Liberalism, Neo-liberalism and Rationalities of Government,* pp. 37-64, Chicago: Chicago University Press

——(1999) *Powers of Freedom*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Rubin, J (1998) "Ambiguity and Contradiction in Radical Popular Movements", in Alvarez, S.E, Dagnino, E and Escobar, A (eds.) *Cultures of Politics, Politics of Culture: Re-visioning of Latin American Social Movements*, pp.141-164, Boulder: Westview Press

Ruiz, L (1992) "Pueblos Indígenas y Etnicidad en la Amazonia", in Cornejo, D and Menacho, D (eds.) *Indios: Una Reflexion sobre el Levantimiento Indígena de 1990,* pp. 449-497, Quito, ILDIS

——(2000) *Amazonia Ecuatoriana: Escenario y Actors del 2000*, Quito: Ecociencia y Comite Ecuatoriano de la UICN

Sacks, R (1986) *Human Territoriality*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Salazar, E (1977) *An Indian Federation in Lowland Ecuador* Copenhagen: Iwgia

——(1981) "The Federación Shuar and the Colonization Frontier", in Whitten, N.E, (ed.) *Cultural Transformations and Ethnicity in Ecuador,* pp. 589-613, Urbana, University of Illinois Press

Saldaana-Portillo, M.S (2003) *The Revolutionary Imagination in the Americas and the Age of Development*, Durham: Duke University Press

Sawyer, S (1992) "The 1992 Indian Mobilization in Lowland Ecuador", *Latin American Perspectives*, 94 24 (3): 65-1982-83

——(1997) *Marching to Nation Across Ethnic Terrain: The Politics of Identity, Territory, and Resource Use in the Ecuadorian Amazon*, Unpublished PhD Thesis, Department of Anthropology, Stanford University

——(2003) "Subterranean Techniques: Corporate Environmentalism, Oil Operations, and Social Injustice in the Ecuadorian Rainforest", in Slater, C (ed.) *In Search of the Rain Forest,* pp. 69-100, London and Durham: Duke University Press

——(2004) *Crude Chronicles: Indigenous Politics, Multinational Oil, and Neoliberalism in Ecuador*, Durham and London: Duke University Press

Seracombe, P and Sellato, B (eds.) (2005) *Beyond the Green Myth: Borneo's Hunter-Gatherers in the 21st Century*, Copenhagen: NIAS Press

Schmink, M and Wood, C (1992) *Contested Frontiers in Amazonia*, New York: Colombia University Press

Schodt, D (1995) *Ecuador: An Andean Enigma*, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press

Schroeder, R.A (1999) *Shady Practices: Agroforestry and Gender Politics in the Gambia*, Berkeley: University of California Press

Schroeder, R.A and Suryanata, K (2004) "Gender and Class Power in Agroforestry Systems: Case Studies from Indonesia and West Africa", in Peet, R and Watts, M (eds.), *Liberation Ecologies: Environment, Development, Social Movements,* 2nd ed. pp. 299-315, London and New York: Routledge

Scott, J. C (1985) *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance,* New Haven: Yale University Press

——(1990) *Domination and the Art of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*, New Haven: Yale University Press

——(1998) *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*, New Haven: Yale University Press

Selverston-Scher, M (1994) "The Politics of Culture: Indigenous Peoples and the State in Ecuador", in Van Cott, D.L, (ed.) *Indigenous Peoples and Democracy in Latin America,* pp. 131-152, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press

——(2001) *Ethnopolitics in Ecuador: Indigenous Rights and the Strengthening of Democracy*, Coral Gables, Fla.: North-South Center Press

Sharp, J, Routledge, P, Philo, C and Paddison, R (2000) "Entanglements of Power: Geographies of Domination/Resistance", in Sharp, J, Routledge, P, Philo, C and Paddison, R (eds.) *Entanglements of Power: Geographies of Domination/Resistance*, pp. 1-42, London: Routledge

Silverblatt, I (1995) "Becoming Indian in the Central Andes of Seventeenth- Century Peru", in Prakash, G (ed.) *After Colonialism: Imperial Histories and Postcolonial Displacements,* pp. 279-298, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press

Silverman, D (2001) *Interpreting Qualitative: Methods for Analyzing Talk, Text and Interpretation*, 2nd ed., London, Sage

Simons, J (1995) *Foucault and the Political*, London: Routledge

Simmons, C. S (2002) "The Local Articulation of Policy Conflict: Land Use, Environment, and Amerindian Rights in Eastern Amazonia", *Professional Geographer* 54: 241-258

Sissons, J (2005) *First Peoples: Indigenous Cultures and Their Futures*, London: Reaction Book

Skjaerseth, J.B and Skodvin, T (2003) *Climate Change and the Oil Industry*, Manchester: Manchester University Press

Slater, C (ed.) (2003) *In Search of the Rain Forest,* London and Durham: Duke University Press

Slater, D (1985) *New Social Movements and the State in Latin America* Amsterdam: CEDLA

——(1994a) "Power and Social Movements in the Other Occident: Latin America in an International Context", *Latin American Perspective* 21 (2): 11-37

——(1994b) "Exploring Other Zones of the Post-Modern: Problems of Ethnocentrism and Difference Across the North-South Divide", in Rattansi, A. and Westwood, S. (eds.), *Racism, Modernity and Identity*, pp 87-125, Cambridge: Polity Press

——(1998) "Rethinking the Spatialities of Social Movements: Questions of Borders, Culture, and Politics in Global Times", in Alvarez, S.E, Dagnino, E and Escobar, A (eds.) *Culture of Politics, Politics of Culture: Re-envisioning Latin American Social Movements,* pp. 380-404, Boulder: Westview Press

Smillie, I (1995) *The Alms Bazaar*, London: Intermediate Technology

Smith, A (1991) *National Identity*, Harmondsworth: Penguin

Smith, N (1992) "Geography, Difference and the Politics of Scale", in Doherty, J, Graham, E and Malek, M (eds.) *Postmodernism and the Social Sciences*, pp. 57-78, London: Macmillan

Steinberg, P.F (2001) *Environmental Leadership in Developing Countries: Transnational Relations and Biodiversity Policy in Costa Rica and Bolivia*, Cambridge: MIT Press

Stiffler, S (2003) *In the Shadows of State and Capital: The United Fruit Company, Popular Struggle, and Agrarian Restructuring in Ecuador, 1900-1995*, Durham and London: Duke University Press

Stiglitz, J (2002) *Globalisation and its Discontent*, London: Penguin Books

St. Martin, K (2001) "Making Space for Community Resource Management in Fisheries", *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 91 (1): 122-42

Stock, B (1993) "Reading Community and a Sense of Place", in Duncan, J and Ley, D (eds.) *Place/Culture/Representation*; pp. 314-327, London, New York: Routledge

Stonich, S (ed.) (2001) *Endangered Peoples of Latin America: Struggles to Survive and Thrives*, Westport Conn.: Greenwood Press

Storey, D (2001) *Territory: The Claiming of Space*, London: Prentice Hall

Stott, P and Sullivan, S (eds.) (2000) *Political Ecology: Science, Myth and Power*, London: Arnold

Sundberg, J (2004) "Identities in the Making: Conservation, Gender and Race in the Maya Biosphere Reserve, Guatemala", *Gender, Place and Culture* 11:43-66

Swyngedouw, E (1997) "Neither Global nor Local: Globalisation and the Politics of Scale", in Cox, K (ed.) *Spaces of Globalisation*, pp. 137-66, New York: Guildford

Tarrow, S (1994) *Power in the Movement*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Taylor, P.J (1992) "Politics in Maps, Maps in Politics: A Tribute to Brian Todorov", *Political Geography*, 11(2): 127-29

——(1994) "The State Container: Territoriality in the Modern World-System", *Progress in Human Geography* 18 (2): 151-162

Thompson, M and Rayner, S (1998) "Cultural Discourses", in Rayner, S and Malone, E (eds.) *Human Choices and Climate Changes*, pp. 265-343, Vol. 1 The Societal Framework, Columbus: Batelle

Thoumi, F and Grindle, M (1992) *La Politics de la Economia del Ajuste: La Actual Experiencia Ecuatoriana*, Quito: FLASCO

Thrift, N (1999) "Steps to an Ecology of Place", in Massey, D and J, Allen (eds.) *Human Geography Today,* pp. 295-322, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Ticona, E, A (2000) *Organización y Liderazgo Aymara, 1979-1996,* La Paz: Universidad de la Cordillera, AGRUCO

Tilley, C (1988) "Social Movements, Old and New: Research in Social Movements", *Conflict and Change* 10: 1-18

Touraine, A (1981) *The Voice and the Eye: An Analysis of Social Movements*, New York: Cambridge University Press

——(1988) *Return of the Actor: Social Theory in Postindustrial Society*, Minneapolis, Minnesota University Press

Tuck-Po, L (2004) *Changing Path-ways: Forest Degradation and the Batek of Pahang, Malaysia*, New York: Lexington Press

Utting, P (1993) *Trees, People and Power: Social Dimensions of Deforestation and Forest Protection in Central America*, London: Earthscan

Valentine, G (1997) "Tell me about...Using Interviews as Research Method", in Flowerdew, R and Martin, D (eds.) *Methods in Human Geography*, pp. 110-125. London: Routledge

Van Cott, D.L (ed) (1994) *Indigenous Peoples and Democracy in Latin America*, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press

——(1999) *Towards a Multicultural State: Ethnic Autonomy Movements in Latin America*, Knoxville, University of Tennessee (unpublished working paper)

——(2000) "*The Friendly Liquidation of the Past: The Politics of Diversity in Latin America*, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press

——(2003) "Indigenous Struggle", *Latin American Research Review*, vol. 38 (2): 221-233

Van der Haar, G (1998) *El Reporte Agrario en la Region Alta Tojolaba*, Report prepared for the IV Mayan International Congress, Antigua, Guatemala

Vandergeest, P (1996) "Mapping Natures: Territorialization of Forestry Rights in Thailand", *Society and Natural Resources* 9 (2): 159-76

Vandergeest, P and Peluso, N.L (1995) "Territorialization and State Power in Thailand", *Theory and Society* 24: 385-426

Vickers, V.T (1992) "Indian Policy in Amazonian Ecuador", in Schmink, M and Wood, C, (eds.) *The Frontier Expansion in Amazonia*, pp. 8-32, Gainesville: University of Florida Press.

Vitug, M.D (1993) *The Politics of Logging: Power from the Forest*, Manila, Philippine Centre for Investigative Journalism

Vivian, J.M (1994) "NGOs and Sustainable Development in Zimbabwe: No Magic Bullets", *Development and Change*, 25:167-93

Walker, K.J (1989) "The State in Environmental Management: The Ecological Dimension", *Political Studies* 37: 25-38

Walker, R.B.J (1990) *Inside/Outside*: *International Relations as Political Theory*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Warren, K (1998) "Indigenous Movement as a Challenge to the Unified Social Movement Paradigm for Guatemala", in Alvarez, S.E, Dagnino, E, Escobar, A, *Cultures of Politics, Politics of Culture: Re-visioning of Latin American Social Movements,* pp. 165-195, Boulder: Westview Press

Warren, K and Jackson, J.E (eds.) (2003) *Indigenous Movements, Self-Representation, and the State in Latin America*, Austin: University of Texas Press

Watts, M (1994) "Black Gold, White Heat", in Pile, S and Keith, M, (eds.) *Geographies of Resistance,* pp. 33-67, London: Routledge

——(1998) "Nature as Artifice and Artifact", in Braun, B and Castree, N (eds.) *Remaking Reality: Nature at the Millennium*, pp. 243-268, London: Routledge

——(2004) "Violent Environments: Petroleum Conflict and the Political Ecology of Rule in the Niger Delta, Nigeria", in Peet, R and Watts, M (eds.) *Liberation Ecologies: Environment, Development, Social Movements*, 2nd ed. pp. 273-298, London: Routledge

Weisbrod, B (1998) "The Nonprofit Mission and Its Financing", in Weisbrod, B (ed.) *To Profit or Not to Profit,* pp. 1-22, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Whitten, N.E (ed.) (1981) *Cultural Transformations and Ethnicity in Ecuador*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press

Whittier, N, Robnett, B and Meyer, D.S (eds.) (2002) *Social Movements: Identity, Culture, and the State*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

Wilson, K (1992) "Thinking about Ethics in Fieldwork", in Devereaux, S and Hoddinott (eds.) *Fieldwork in Developing Countries*, pp. 179-199, Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf

Wilson, R (1999) "Placing Nature: The Politics of Collaboration and Representation in the Struggle for La Sierra in San Luis, Colorado", *Ecumene* 6(1): 1-28

Wray, N (2000) *Pueblos Indígenas Amazónicos y Actividades Petrolera en el Ecuador: Conflictos, Estrategicas e Impactos*, Quito: Oxfam America

Yashar, D.J (1998) "Indigenous Movements and Democracy: Contesting Citizenship in Latin America", *Journal of. Latin American Studies* 35(4): 751–777

——(1999) "Democracy, Indigenous Movements and the Postliberal Challenge", *World Politics* 52 (1): 76-104

——(2005) *Contesting Citizenship in Latin America: The Rise of Indigenous Movements and the Postliberal Challenge*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Yin, R (1994) *Case Study Research*, London: Sage

Yáñez, S. M (1992) "El levantamiento indígena del Inti Raymi de 1990", Quito: Fundación Ecuatoriana de Estudios Sociales: Editorial Abya-Ayala

Zamosc, L (1994) *Agrarian Protest and the Indian Movement in the Ecuadorian Highlands*, Quito: Abya Yala

Zerner, C (ed.) (1999) *People, Plants and Justice*, New York: Colombia University Press

Zimmerer, K.S, and Bassett, T.J (eds.) (2003) *Political Ecology: An Integrative Approach to geography and Environment-Development Studies*, Guildford: Guildford Press

Zimmerman, M (2001) "Rigoberta Menchu after the Nobel: From Militant Narrative to Postmodern Politics", in Rodriguez, I (ed.) *The Latin American Subaltern Studies Reader*, pp. 111-128, Durham and London: Duke University Press

Primary Documents

CARE (2003) *Alternativas Legales para la Territorialidad Indígena*, Quito: CARE.

CDES (ed.) (2000a) *Tarmiat: Firmes en Nuestra Territorio,* Quito: CDES/CONAIE

——(2000b) *Ecuador: Apertura 2000*, Brochure CDES, Quito: CDES.

——(2002a) *Tarmiat: Firmes en Nuestra Territorio,* Quito: CDES/CONIAE *Boletin de Prensa,* Quito: CDES 17th April

——(2002b) *Pueblos Indígenas, Estado y Petroleo en la Amazonia Centro-Sur del Ecuador*, Quito: CDES

——(2002c) *Petroleo, Ambiente y Derechos en la Amazonian Centro-Sur*, Quito: SERGRAFIC

——(2002d) *Tarmiat: Firmes en Nuestra Territorio,* 2nd ed. Quito: CDES/CONAIE

Comité Interfederacional (2001) *Primera Convencìon de las Nacionalidades Shuar y Achuar del Transkutukù por la Defensa del Territorio*, Pumpuentsa, 28th October

——(2002) *Segunda Convencìon de las Nacionalidades Shuar y Achuar del Transkutuku por la Defensa del Territorio,* 11th September 2002, Shinkiatam, Ecuador

——(2003) *Trecera Convencion de las Nacionalidades Shuar y Achuar del Transkutukù por la Defensa del Territorio,* 12th December, Makuma, Ecuador

——(2004a) *Boletin de prensa*, Puyo: Comite Interfederacional, 31st January

——(2004b) *Plan de Accìon*, Puyo: Comite Interfederacional, 31st March

CONDEMPE (2002) *Proyecto de Ley de Nacionalidades y Pueblos Indigenas*, Quito: CONDEMPE

——(2004) *Proyecto de Desarrollo*, Quito: CONDEMPE

Continuan Actos Terroristas, Letter from Vice-presidents of AIERPA and FENAQUIPA, President of ARUTAM, Presidents of Taisha, ASODIRA, FEDECAP, Puyo, Ecuador, 27th October 2001

Convenio de Cooperacion, 25th February 1999, Quito, CDES Archives

Federaciòn de Centros Shuar (1974) *Solucìon Original a un Problema Actual*, Sucua: Mundo Shuar

FIPSE (1998a) *Acta de la Asemblea Extraordinaria de FIPSE*, Macas, Morona Santiago

——(1998b) *Deamnda de Recurso de Amparo Interpuesto por la FIPSE en Contra da la Compania ARCO Oriente Inc.*, Macas, Morona Santiago

——(1999) *Tribunal Constitucional: Resolucion no. 247-RA-00-I.S (994-99.RA)*

—— (2001) *Palabras Mayores*, Quito: CDES

——(2002a) *Acuerdo Ministerial N° 2884-A del 27 de Diciembre de 1.996*, Makuma, Morona Santiago

——(2002b) *FIPSE – PRODEPINE: Plan de Accíon Communitaria Communidades de Nunkui, Etza, Kamapnak, Yajints, Suwa, Chumpi y Chikichiketntsa*

——(2002c) FIPSE– PRODEPINE: Plan de Accíon Communitaria Communidad de Santa Rosa

——(2003) *Iinforme Narrativo Proyecto Ii Nunke*, Macas, Morona Santiago, 10th March

——(2004) *Resoluciones de la VII Asemblea de la FIPSE*, Makuma, Morona Snatigao, 11th March

International Labour Organisation (1989) *Convention (No. 169) concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries*, Adopted on 27 June 1989 by the General Conference of the International Labour

OPIP (1992) *Documento de Legalizacíon Territorial*, Puyo, Pastaza

Petroleum Economist (1999) *Foreign Investment remains the key to Oil Sector Growth*, Petroleum Economist, 30 September

Petroleum Intelligence Weekly (2002) *Supplement Interview: Petroecuador's President Looks on the Bright Side*, Energy Intelligence Group, Inc, August 5

Reproduccìon Escaneada, signed by Jacinto Carinkia, Vice-president AIEPRA, Alfonso Chango, Vice-president FENAQUIPA, Angel Shakay, AIEPRA, Hector Mayancha, President ASODIRA, Antonio Moncayo, President FENASH, Galo Saant, President Taisha Association, Martin Chamic, President ARUTAM, Manuel Maich, FIPSE, Puyo, 27th October 2001

Interviews

Almedia, Alexandra (2002) Representative for Accion Ecologìca, Interview held 2nd July Accion Ecologìca office, Quito

Anguash, Miguel (2003) Community resident in Ijinti, Interview held the 10th December in Ijinti, Pastaza Province

Anguash, Rosa (2004) Community resident in Shinkiatam, Interview held the 23rd April in Shinkiatam, Morona Santiago Province

Anguisha, Estaban (2003) Community elder in Naparuk, Interview held the 16th October, Naparuk, Morona Santiago Province

Anguisha, Jesus (2003) Community resident in Naparuk, Interview held the 17th October, Naparuk, Morona Santiago Province

Anguisha, Milton (2003) Community resident in Naparuk, Interview held the 17th October, Naparuk, Morona Santiago Province

Anguisha, Oswaldo (2003) Community resident in Naparuk, Interview held the 17th October, Naparuk, Morona Santiago Province

Antuash, Patricio (2002) Secretary for the Comitè Interfederacìonal, Interview held the 11th September Comitè Interfederacìonal Second Annual Meeting, Shinkiatam, Morona Santiago Province

Arboela, Carlos (2003) Senior Official Ministry of Energy and Mining, Conversation at the *Comité Interfederacìonal* Meeting in Makuma, 12-13th December

Belen Paez, Maria (2004) Representative for Pachamama, Comitè Interfederacìonal Meeting, 31st March, Puyo

Beltran, Bolivar (2004) Representative for The Institute for Science and Interdisciplinary Studies (ISIS), Interview held the 31st March Comitè Interfederacìonal Meeting, Puyo

Canellos, Francisco (2004) Community resident in Mukucham, Interview held the 15th February in Mukucham, Pastaza Province

Chumbia, Armando (2003) Community resident in Ijinti, Interview held the 2nd December in Ijinti, Pastaza Province

Chumpi, Cesar (2003) Community resident in Ijinti, Interview held the 2nd December in Ijinti, Pastaza Province

Chumpi, Luis (2004) Community elder in Mukucham, Interview held the 15th February in Mukucham, Pastaza Province

Elliot, David (2004) Representative of Pachamama, Interview held the 1st May at the Pachamama office, Quito

Himpikit, Patricio (2004) Community resident in Shinkiatam, Interview held the 15th April in Shinkiatam, Morona Santiago Province

Himpikit, Rosa (2004) Community resident in Shinkiatam, Interview held the 15th April in Shinkiatam, Morona Santiago Province

Jambis, Milton (2004) Community resident in Mukucham, Interview held the 28th February in Mukucham, Pastaza Province

Koster, Harko (2004) Co-coordinator SNV, Interview held the 15th May at the SNV office, Macas

Kuash, Calixto (2003) Community resident in Chuwitayu, Interview held the 26th December in Chuwitayu, Pastaza Province

Kuash, Luis (2003) Founder of Ijinti Educational Project, Interview held the 28th July in Ijinti, Pastaza Province

Kuash, Luis (2004) Founder of Ijinti and former CONFENIAE leader, Interview held the 13th January at the CONFENIAE office, Union Base, Puyo

Kuash, Manuel (2003) Community Resident in Chuwitayu, Interview held the 26th December in Chuwitayu, Pastaza Province

Kuja, Amelia (2004) Community resident in Shinkiatam, Interview held the 5th April in Shinkiatam, Morona Santiago Province

Kuja, Armando (2004) Community resident in Shinkiatam, Interview held the 3rd April in Shinkiatam, Morona Santiago Province

Kuja, Bartolome, (2004) Community resident in Shinkiatam, Interview held the 3rd April in Shinkiatam, Morona Santiago Province

Kuja, Carmela (2004) Community resident in Shinkiatam, Interview held the 1st April in Shinkiatam, Morona Santiago Province

Kuja, Lauro (2004) Teacher in Ijinti and community resident in Jurallpa, interview held in the 15th March in Jurallpa, Pastaza Province

Kuja, Pedro (2004) Community resident in Shinkiatam, Interview held the 3rd April in Shinkiatam, Morona Santiago Province

Lopez, Victor (2002) CDES representative, Interview held at the CDES office, Quito

Maiche, Manuel (2003) Shuar leader, Arutam, Interview held the 13th December in Ijinti, Pastaza Province

Martinez, Maria (2003) Community elder in Naparuk, Interview held the 20th October in Naparuk, Morona Santiago Province

Melo, Mario (2002) CDES representative, Interview held the 17th July, CDES office, Quito

Mukucham, Alfonso (2004) Community resident in Mukucham, Interview held the 24th February in Mukucham, Pastaza Province

Mukucham, Angel (2004) Community resident in Mukucham, Interview held the 24th February in Mukucham, Pastaza Province

Mukucham, Hilda (2004) Community resident in Mukucham, Interview held the 16th February in Mukucham, Pastaza Province

Mukucham, Ilda (2004) Community resident in Mukucham, Interview held the 15th February in Mukucham, Pastaza Province

Mukucham, Jorge (2004) Community resident in Mukucham, Interview held the 24th February in Mukucham, Pastaza Province

Mukucham, Luis (2004) Community elder in Mukucham, Interview held the 15th February in Mukucham, Pastaza Province.

Mukucham, Pedro (2004) Community elder in Mukucham, Interview held the 25th March, in Mukucham, Pastaza Province

Mukucham, Tsamariant (2004) Community resident in Mukucham, Interview held the 23rd February in Mukucham, Pastaza Province

Nantip, Gonzalo (2002) Vice President FICSH, Interview held the 30th July, Sucua

Nantip, Gonzalo (2004) Vice-President FICSH, Interview held the 15th April, FICSH office, Sucua

Nayap, Daniel (2004), FIPSE leader, Finance, Interview held the 16th May, FIPSE office, Macas

Najandey, Bosco (2004) Ex-president FIPSE, Interview held the 15th May, FIPSE office, Macas

Najandey, Manuel (2002) FIPSE leader, Interview held the 15th June, FIPSE office, Macas

Nunkias, Rosiendo (2004), FICSH leader, territory, Interview held the 15th April, FICSH office, Sucua

Pandam, Pedro (2004) FICSH leader, Interview held the 14th April, FICSH office, Sucua

Pandam, Rafael (2002) Vice-President FIPSE, Interview held the 24th July, FIPSE office, Macas

Peas, Gonzalo (2003) Community Resident in Ijinti, Interview held the 17th December in Ijinti, Pastaza Province

Pitiur, Alfredo (2004) President of OSHE, Interview held the 23rd March, OSHE office, Macas

Puanchir, Tito (2002) Vice-president of CONAIE and Ex-president of FIPSE, Interview held the 14th July, CONAIE office, Quito

Puanchir, Tito (2004) Vice-president of CONAIE and Ex-president of FIPSE, Interview held the 31st January, Comitè Interfederacìonal meeting in Puyo

Rodriguez, N, F, Dr. (2004) Senior Official, Ministry of Environment, Interview held the 20th January, Ministry and Environment office, Quito

Sanduo, Francisco (2002) Ex-president of FIPSE, Interview held the 25th July, FIPSE office, Macas

Sandu, Kuamar (2002), Co-coordinator Comitè Interfederacìonal, Interview held at the Comitè Interfederacìonal Second Annual Meeting, 11th September, Shinkiatam, Morona Santiago Province

Serrano, Jose (2004) Lawyer working for CDES, Interview held the15th April, CDES office, Quito

Shakay, Adolfo (2004) Ex-President CONFENIAE, Interview held the 22nd January, Union Base, Puyo

Shakay, Rosa (2004) FICSH leader, Interview held 31st January, Comitè Interfederacìonal meeting in Puyo

Taki, Jorge (2003) President of Ijinti, Interview held the 3rd March in Ijinti, Pastaza Province

Taki, Jorge (2004) President of Ijinti, Interview held the 28th February in Mukucham, Pastaza Province

Tivi, Elías Catani (2002), Former FIPSE leader, Interview held the 15th July, FIPSE office, Macas

Tibi, Manuel, (2004) Shuar shaman, Interview held the 15th October in Naparuk, Morona Santiago Province

Tibi, Manuel (2002) A young Shuar living outside Puyo, Interview held the 31 July in Puyo, Pastaza Province

Tibi, Silvia (2002) Shuar leader, FENASH, Interview held the 30th August in Puyo

Tsamariant, Manuel (2002) Community resident in Chuwitayu, Interview held the 28th July in Chuwitayu, Pastaza Province

Tseremp, Gonzalo (2004) Community resident in Mukucham, Interview held the 16th February in Mukucham, Pastaza Province

Tsere, Pablo (2002) Ex- President FISCH, Interview held the 31st June, FICSH office, Sucua

Tsere, Pablo (2004) Ex-President FICSH, Interview held the 31st, *Comitè Interfederacìonal* Meeting, Puyo

Tsere, Pedro (2002) FICSH leader, Interview held the 31st June 2002, FICSH office, Sucua

Tupac, Cesar (2004) Shuar leader FIPSE, Interview held the 31st March 2004, *Comitè Interfederacìonal* Meeting, Puyo

Tukupi, Marco (2004) Community resident in Shinkiatam, Interview held the 15th April in Shinkiatam, Morona Santiago Province

Uwi, R (2002) Shuar leader FICSH, Interview held the 23rd July, FICSH office, Sucua, Pastaza Province

Vargas, Luis (2004) Achuar leaders FINAE, Interview held the 31st March, *Comitè Interfederacìonal* Meeting, Puyo

Vargas, Miguel (2004) Shuar leader CONFENIAE, Interview held the 22nd January CONFENIAE office, Union Base, Puyo

Vargas, Kuash, , Patricia (2003) Community Resident in Ijinti, Interview held the 22nd December in Ijinti, Pastaza

Government Registry

Ley de Prevencìon y Control de la Contaminacìon Ambiental (Law for the Prevention and Control of Environmental pollution) No. 374; Registro Oficial 1997-98:31.5.5.76, articles 8-11, 16, 20

Ley Forestal y de Conservacìon de areas Naturales y Vida Silvestre y Reglamento (Law and regulation on Forests and Conservation of Natural Areas and Wildlife) No.74; Registro Oficial 64:28.8.81 and Decreto Ejecutivo 1529; Registro Oficial 436:22.2.83

Ley que Protégé la Biodiversidad (Law for the Protection of Biodiversity) No 3: Registro Oficial 35:27.9.96

Oficio No. 0095-DNH-EE 02 0171, 10th January 2002, Director Nacional de Hidrocarburos, Ing. Juan Carlos Bermeo, Gerente de Desarollo de Negocios de Burlington, Sr Herb Vickers

Tsamariant, Manuel (2002) Community resident in Chuwitayu, Interview held the 28th July in Chuwitayu, Pastaza Province

Tseremp, Gonzalo (2004) Community resident in Mukucham, Interview held the 16th February in Mukucham, Pastaza Province

Tsere, Pablo (2002) Ex- President FISCH, Interview held the 31st June, FICSH office, Sucua

Tsere, Pablo (2004) Ex-President FICSH, Interview held the 31st, *Comitè Interfederacìonal* Meeting, Puyo

Tsere, Pedro (2002) FICSH leader, Interview held the 31st June 2002, FICSH office, Sucua

Tupac, Cesar (2004) Shuar leader FIPSE, Interview held the 31st March 2004, *Comitè Interfederacìonal* Meeting, Puyo

Tukupi, Marco (2004) Community resident in Shinkiatam, Interview held the 15th April in Shinkiatam, Morona Santiago Province

Uwi, R (2002) Shuar leader FICSH, Interview held the 23rd July, FICSH office, Sucua, Pastaza Province

Vargas, Luis (2004) Achuar leaders FINAE, Interview held the 31st March, *Comitè Interfederacìonal* Meeting, Puyo

Vargas, Miguel (2004) Shuar leader CONFENIAE, Interview held the 22nd January CONFENIAE office, Union Base, Puyo

Vargas, Kuash, , Patricia (2003) Community Resident in Ijinti, Interview held the 22nd December in Ijinti, Pastaza

Government Registry

Ley de Prevencìon y Control de la Contaminacìon Ambiental (Law for the Prevention and Control of Environmental pollution) No. 374; Registro Oficial 1997-98:31.5.5.76, articles 8-11, 16, 20

Ley Forestal y de Conservacìon de areas Naturales y Vida Silvestre y Reglamento (Law and regulation on Forests and Conservation of Natural Areas and Wildlife) No.74; Registro Oficial 64:28.8.81 and Decreto Ejecutivo 1529; Registro Oficial 436:22.2.83

Ley que Protégé la Biodiversidad (Law for the Protection of Biodiversity) No 3; Registro Oficial 35:27.9.96

Oficio No. 0095-DNH-EE 02 0171, 10th January 2002, Director Nacional de Hidrocarburos, Ing. Juan Carlos Bermeo, Gerente de Desarollo de Negocios de Burlington, Sr Herb Vickers

Reglamento para la Prevencìon y Control de la Contaminacìon (Regulation for the Prevention and Control of Pollution, regarding water resources) No. 2144; Registro Oficial 204:5.6.89, Articles 11,17,22-25,64

Artículo 5 de la Constítuíon
Artículo 83 de la Constítuíon
Artículo 84 de la Constítuíon
Artículo 83 de la Constítuíon
Artículo 224 de la Constítuíon
Artículo 241 de la Constítuíon
Artículo 247 de la Constítuíon
Artículo 248 de la Constítuíon

Ecuadorian State Laws

1964 Ley de Desarrollo Agrario
1964 Ley de Tierras Baltidas
1993. Hydrocarbon Law
1994. Ley de Ordenamiento del Sector Agrario

IERAC Documents

1992 Title Deeds
1994 Indigenous Territories

Web-based Materials

Abya Yala (1992) "Ecuador/ Indian March", http://abyayala.nativeweb.org/ecuador/quichua_am/apr92_4.html

Amazonwatch (2004a) Houston-based Burlington Resources Prepares to Use Ecuadorian Military to Forcibly Enter Amazon Indian Lands- Military Invasion Expected as Early as Tomorrow", Assessed the 28th January 2004, www.amazonwatch.org

——(2004b) "Amazonian Indigenous Leaders Travel to Houston – Call on Burlington Resources to Immediately Abandon Controversial Oil Drilling Projects on Their Territories", Assessed 14th April 2004, www.amazonwatch.org

——(2004c) "Burlington's Oil Projects vs. Indigenous Communities and Rainforest Protection", Assessed 15th April 2004, www.amazonwatch.org

——(2004d) "Amazonian Indigenous Chief Addresses Burlington Resources Shareholders on Controversial Oil Projects", Assessed 21st April 2004, www.amazonwatch.org

—— (2004e) "New Problems for Burlington Resources' Rainforest Drilling Plans". Assessed 27th April 2004, www.amazonwatch.org

Burlington Resources (2003), Annual Report 2003, http://www.br--inc.com

—— (2004a) "Indigenous Communities Rights Policy"

—— (2004b) "Ecuador: The Status of Blocks 23 and 24", Assessed 31st August 2004, http://www.br-inc.com/reputation/ecuadorstatusfacts.aspx

—— (2004c) "Environment, Health and Management Systems", Assessed 1st September 2004, http://www.br-inc.com/reputation/environmentalhealthandsafety.asp

ECORAE (2004) "Desafíos de la Amazonia", Assessed 21 January 2004, http://www.ecorae.org,

ELDIS (2004) "Tools for Participation", Assessed August 2003, www.eldis.com

El Univesro (2004) "Indígenas piden salida Burlington", Assessed April 2004 http://www.eluniverso.com/core3/eluniverso.asp?page=noticia&id=9&tab=1&contid=FB542A2550BF4DA7BF3CC45D008E7922&EUID='

Expreso de Guayaquil (1999) 25th July 1999

The Houston Chronicle (2004) "Tribe delivers message at shareholder meeting", Assessed April 2004, http://www.chron.com/cs/CDA/ssistory.mpl/business/energy/2522708

Instituto Geográfico Militar (2004) Map of Ecuador, http://www.igm.gov.ec/

New York Times (2004) "Burlington Resources Plans for Ecuador Run Into Opposition", Assessed April 2004, http://www.nytimes.com/2004/04/22/business/22energy.html

Pachamama (1999) "Court Decides in Favor of Indigenous Federations and Against Arco", Assessed June 2002, www.pachamama.org

—— (2001a) "Achuar and Shuar Federations Stand in Solidarity Against Oil Development", Assessed June 2003, www.pachamama.org

—— (2001b) "FIPSE Completes Land-use Planning Proposal for New Regional Development Strategy", Assessed June 2002, www.pachamama.org

—— (2002a) "Shuar Federation and Team of International NGO's Collaborates with Pachamama to Implement Groundbreaking Plan for Territorial Management and Development", Assessed June 2002, www.pachamama.org

—— (2002b) "Over 500 Achuar and Shuar marched in solidarity, as their federations present a lawsuit to defend their territories against illegal incursions by Texas-based oil company Burlington Resources", Assessed June 2002, www.pachamama.org

—— (2002c) "AMAZONGISNET - A Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Network for Indigenous Cartographers", Assessed June 2002, www.pachamama.org

——(2003) "Ecuadorian Ministry of Government Temporarily Suspends Exploratory Oil Operations in Achuar and Shuar Ancestral Territory", Assessed January, www.pachamama.org

PROPEDINE (2002) "Ecuador: Project for the Development of Indigenous Peoples in Ecuador", Assessed August 2002, http://www.PROPEDINE.org

Sarayacu (2005) "The Government protects an oil company that has violated our constitution and our laws", Assessed April, www.sarayacu.com